A

POLITICAL MIRROR,

FOR MDCCLXXX.

WITH

NOTES EXPLANATORY AND HISTORICAL.

Nihil tam firmum est, cui periculum non sit, etiam ab invalido. QUINT. CURT.

THE SECOND EDITION.

By W. A. MILES.

TO WHICH IS ANNEXED,

THE AFFIDAVIT OF FRANCIS SYKES, ESQ.

ON WHICH THE COURT OF KING'S BENCH IN THE LAST TERM GRANTED A RULE FOR THE AUTHOR TO SHEW CAUSE WHY AN INFORMATION SHOULD NOT BE FILED AGAINST HIM FOR A LIBEL.

WITH OBSERVATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE.

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1780

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ON THE

ANSWER of the KING OF GREAT BRITAIN,

TO THE

MANIFESTO, &c.

Of the COURT OF VERSAILLES.

Price One Shilling.

E R R A T A.

PAGE 22, 11th line from the top, for *singular*, read regular.—p. 33, 8th line, add, *at the* distance, &c.—p. 36, 10th line, for *conditional*, read *unconditional*.—p. 37, in the note, read near *one hundred thousand pounds*, instead of one million, and again, in the last line of the note, read Gazettes for Gazette.—p. 50, in the note at the bottom of the page, for *Quiquid boni* read *Quicquid est boni*.—p. 51, for *more nervous animating*, read more nervous and animating.—p. 52, for *shameful confusion*, read shame and confusion.

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THIS

POLITICAL PAMPHLET,

IS,

WITH THE UTMOST DEFERENCE AND RESPECT,

INSCRIBED TO

Sir EDWARD NEWENHAM, Bart.

REPRESENTATIVE AND TRUSTEE IN PARLIAMENT FOR THE ELECTORS OF THE COUNTY OF DUBLIN;

AS A SINCERE THOUGH TRIFLING TESTIMONY OF THE VERY EXALTED OPINION IN WHICH HIS INFLEXIBLE AND VIRTUOUS ATTACHMENT TO THE CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS OF HIS COUNTRY IS HELD

BY HIS

MUCH OBLIGED FRIEND,

AND

FAITHFUL HUMBLE SERVANT,

WILLIAM AUGUSTUS MILES.

London, Dec. 11, 1779.

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Easton, Dec. 11, 1799.

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IT would be difficult to decide, a century hence, how a nation, great in arms and in reputation, could have fallen, in the courſe of a very few years, from the zenith of human grandeur to a ſtate of poverty, contempt, and imbecility, if the invention of letters had not enabled mankind to tranſmit to future generations the meaſures of princes and of miniſters, and to examine, without reſerve, into the motives of their conduct.

It is to the fidelity of hiſtory, that we are often indebted for the moderation we meet with from bad men inveſted with authority; and if the dread of being expoſed to after times has operated as a check to tyranny and lawleſs ambition, we have only to lament that it has not been of equal efficacy in all nations and in all ages of the world.

The innumerable inſtances in which a conſiderable portion of the human ſpecies have groaned beneath the yoke of unfeeling deſpotiſm, abundantly prove that this apprehenſion has not been equal to the taſk of confining the views and deſigns of princes to the intereſts and happineſs of their ſubjects; on the contrary, the hiſtory of human nature is crouded with examples of perfidy, cruelty, and oppreſſion, which no circumſtances could juſtify, and neither a ſenſe of ſhame, nor remorſe of conſcience prevent.

From the earlieſt period of recorded time, we find, that the luſt of dominion hath rendered princes leſs ſenſible of their obligations to their ſub-

jects; and that from the firſt eſtabliſhment of civil ſociety, mankind have ever been engaged in reſiſting ſlavery, and contending for thoſe rights, which Providence, in its infinite wiſdom, having decreed to *all*, never intended as the excluſive property of a *few*.—The annals of the world are replete with contentions for unlimited power on one hand, and with inſtances of reſiſtance on the other; and while princes, ambitious of prerogative, have dared to derive their right to ſovereignty from heaven, the people, no leſs jealous of their liberties, have denied the inſolent claim, and triumphed at once over impiety and injuſtice.

The various commotions in which this country hath been engaged ſince the Norman conqueſt, have always terminated in favour of the people; and if they have not cultivated the advantages which they have gained over deſpotiſm, as they might, and as they ought to have done, and if they have neglected to perfect our excellent model of a conſtitution into a permanent and incorruptible ſyſtem of government, it is becauſe the times of civil diſcord do not afford leiſure for reflection, and mankind, however inclined they may be to ſecure themſelves from tyranny and oppreſſion, are ever impatient in a ſtate of anarchy for the return of peace and good order.

That Cromwell felt the juſtice of this obſervation, is evident from the anxiety he diſcovered, and the extreme caution with which he perſonally conducted himſelf during the ſhort period of his uſurpation.

The nation was very far from being reconciled to his authority, though the treaſon* and duplicity of Charles I. had been puniſhed with death, nor could his vigorous, or rather his magnanimous adminiſtration, obtain the confidence of the people, ſufficient to give ſtability to his government.

* *Treaſon againſt the conſtitution*, by the firſt magiſtrate preſuming to raiſe money without the authority of parliament; committing the repreſentatives of the people to priſon during pleaſure, and afterwards oppreſſing them with heavy fines, for having diſcharged their duty to their conſtituents with many other acts of violence and injuſtice. Theſe were the treaſons with which THAT weak and inglorious reign abounded, and which finally, but deſervedly, brought the royal traitor to the BLOCK.

WE have ſeen members of the houſe of commons in our time deprived of their civil and military employments, for having defended the rights of the people in parliament againſt the encroachments of the crown; and who would, as well as Sir Miles Hobbart, Sir P. Hayman, Selden, Coriton, Long, and Strode, in the time of *Charles the Firſt*, have been *fined and impriſoned*, if FEAR had not operated as a check to *that* power, which could not exercife its full reſentment, without the riſque of its again reverting to the people, from whom it originated, and to whom it belongs, whenever they ſhall think proper to claim it.

With

30 61 MAY

With an army indeed at his devotion, he contrived to govern under the title of Protector, but the avidity with which the whole kingdom at his death invited the fugitive ſon of the convicted tyrant to the exerciſe of the regal authority, proves to us how impatient they were for the reſtoration of monarchy, and that monarchy alone could give peace and unanimity to a divided people.

Another inſtance of this truth, appears in the revolution of 1688. The expulſion of James II. was infinitely more agreeable to the general ſenſe of the nation, than the death of his father had been; and it was reaſonable to have expected, after the injurious treatment which they had received from a ſucceſſion of kings, and the noble ſpirit with which they had aſſerted their rights, that they would have ſecured themſelves as effectually as poſſible againſt future danger; but the indecent alacrity with which they meanly implored the inſtrument of their revenge to become their ſovereign, is an irrefragable argument, that the multitude underſtand the rights of obedience much better than the bleſſings of liberty.

William III. who was at once a politician and a ſoldier, preferred the cabinet to the field, and accompliſhed that by *intrigue*, which he was too prudent to attempt with the *ſword*. He perfectly underſtood the character of the people with whom he had to deal, and had recourſe to *art*, to obtain what *force* could never have procured. His firſt care was to eſtabliſh a *monied*, in oppoſition to the landed *intereſt*: hence the origin of funds, which are now equal to half the value of the whole landed property of the kingdom, and which have enabled his ſucceſſors to undermine, and in ſome inſtances to deſtroy, the virtue and the ſpirit of our government, without violating its forms.

The three eſtates of the kingdom indeed ſtill preſerve appearances, and we ſubmit to laws which are yet enacted under the forms which the conſtitution preſcribes, but no man can be audacious, or ignorant enough, to affirm, that the people, at this time, are faithfully repreſented; and it is certainly of very little import to them, whether they are enſlaved by a STANDING ARMY, or a MERCENARY PARLIAMENT. The latter mode affords impunity indeed to the prince, and ſecures him from EXILE or the BLOCK, and it is this conſideration alone, perhaps, that preſerves us from the inſolent tyranny of a military force.

It is to the impatience already deſcribed, to which we muſt attribute the numerous defects, with which the conſtitution abounds; and though the wiſdom of our anceſtors was principally directed to circumſcribe the regal authority, and to give to the body of the people the greateſt, or rather the moſt important ſhare in the government, by allotting to their repreſentatives the excluſive right of diſpoſing, in the firſt inſtance, of their property; yet the enormous power of the crown, and the means which it poſſeſſes of *detaching* the repreſentative from the intereſts of his conſtituent, by adminiſtering to his neceſſities, if a needy man, or to his pleaſures or his vanity, if a voluptuous or an ambitious man, has in a great meaſure defeated the wholeſome policy and precaution of our forefathers, and left us little elſe to boaſt of, than the rectitude and patriotiſm of their intentions.

The avowed venality of the commons, which in the infancy of that ſyſtem of corruption, that was introduced among us at the commencement of the preſent century, courted ſecrecy and obſcurity, no longer ſeeks the ſilent ſhade of night, but in open day triumphs in its guilt, and claims the wages of iniquity as its right. Places of truſt or profit, titles or penſions, are the objects to which the repreſentative and Ariſtocratic bodies look up, and as the ſovereign is entruſted with the diſpoſal of them, an implicit acquieſcence to his meaſures will moſt likely be the condition on which they are beſtowed.*

It

* It is unneceſſary to enumerate the many proofs which exiſt of parliamentary infidelity; but there is a recent inſtance of it, ſo peculiarly marked with a thorough contempt of all principle, and even of all reſpect to appearances, that it will neither be impertinent, nor perhaps uſeleſs, on the eve of a general election, to repeat it.

In the year 1773, one of the repreſentatives of the people diſtinguiſhed himſelf by a warm and active oppoſition to adminiſtration, and eſpecially to the firſt lord of the admiralty, whom he then affirmed to be incapable of diſcharging the truſt repoſed in him; the dock-yards were deſcribed as unprovided with a ſufficient quantity of ſtores, the King's ſhips aſſerted to be mouldering to ruin for want of repairs, and the enormous ſums of public money, voted for theſe particular ſervices, were ſaid to have been applied to the obtaining of an undue influence over the county and town of Huntingdon. The miſapplication of the ſupplies, the deplorable ſtate of the navy, and the wilful, and ſometimes contemptuous, neglect of its officers, whoſe names were not regiſtered in the black liſt of paraſites and favourites at the admiralty, were the general topics which attracted the

thunder

It is unneceſſary to illuſtrate the juſtice of this remark by a repetition of facts, which are familiar to the meaneſt individual in the empire. It is ſufficient to obſerve, that it is a truth known and acknowledged by political writers of all denominations, and that the difficulty of preventing this diſhonourable traffic between the prince and the ſenate, has in a manner reconciled, or at leaſt rendered us indifferent to an evil, which our anceſtors had not capacity or prudence to prevent; but however defective the conſtitution may have been tranſmitted to us, however liable it may be to abuſes, the greater and the more evident is the obligation in us to guard its vulnerable parts, and to ſecure it from the attacks of ſecret or avowed enemies.

The authority which has been exerciſed in this reign over the repreſentatives of the people, is not only incompatible with the ſpirit of a free government, but directly contrary to the particular obligations of a Britiſh ſovereign, who is indebted to the generoſity of the people alone for the elevation of his family to the regal dignity.

thunder of this gentleman's eloquence. Many were betrayed into an opinion of his zeal and ſincerity by the violence and conſtancy of his declamation; and the popularity he had acquired, both in and out of parliament, rendered him an adverſary of too much conſequence to be diſregarded or contemned.

Overtures were accordingly made, and the nation, in a ſhort time, beheld him a convert to miniſtry, and like all converts, a violent perſecutor of the ſect he had deſerted; From this moment, he appeared in a new character; he appeared as the friend and companion of the miniſter whom he had inſulted; and, now no longer the *enemy*, but the hardy *champion*, of the admiralty, we hear him juſtifying, as far as noiſe and impudence can juſtify, the very meaſures which he had before reprobated and oppoſed, and eager to throw down his gauntlet at the firſt man who preſumes to queſtion the *omniciensè* of his noble patron and benefactor.

Poverty may ſometimes tempt, and ambition ſeduce, men to give up their principles and opinion; but no inſtance can be produced, in the annals of hiſtory, in which ſo uniform and poſitive a diſregard to truth and decency appears, as in the public conduct of this gentleman.

How long an inſulted people will continue to ſubmit to this indecent mockery of a repreſentation, and confide their liberties with men of ſuch character and principles, is a queſtion which preſcience alone can decide; but that a ſpeedy and ſpirited exertion on their part is become neceſſary, is a truth which no one will be audacious enough to diſpute, who ſeriouſly reflects on the proceedings of the preſent reign, and the ſcandalous venality of both Houſes of Parliament.

From

From the exerciſe of this aſſumed authority an infinity of miſchief may proceed, and againſt which it behoves us to act with decency, indeed, but at the ſame time with dignity and with VIGOUR. To avert the miſchief from, perhaps, the preſent generation, it behoves us to be vigilant and reſolute; and the neceſſity of vigilance and reſolution on our part is ſufficiently obvious when we recollect the meaſures which have been adopted, and the violence which has been offered, ſometimes under the ſanction of law, and ſometimes in defiance of it, by the confidential ſervants of the crown. Our own immediate ſafety, independent of our obligations to poſterity, requires public aſſociations for the ſecurity of public liberty; and though it may neither be abſolutely juſt nor expedient at this moment, to withdraw the truſt which we have delegated, yet it is requiſite that we ſhould watch the conduct of miniſters and of parliament with extreme caution, and no longer ſuffer the one to INVADE, nor the other to BETRAY, thoſe rights, which it is the duty of both to nouriſh and protect.

At a period, like the preſent, big with danger and with difficulty, it is incumbent, not only to ſpeak out with freedom, but to travel back to the commencement of this reign, and to diſcover, if poſſible, the ſource of thoſe ſtreams of corruption which have flowed in upon us ſo rapidly of late, and poiſoned the fountains of virtue and public ſpirit.

In order to inveſtigate this ſubject with that juſtice and preciſion which it deſerves, it will be neceſſary to go back to that period of grandeur and of national felicity, in which our dominion and fame were eſtabliſhed in the four quarters of the habitable globe—a period in which our victorious troops returned in triumph from the extremities of the eaſtern and weſtern hemiſpheres, and rendered us at once the envy and admiration of the world.

France, after having loſt the moſt valuable of her ſugar iſlands, the whole of her oriental poſſeſſions, and all Canada; her forces by ſea and land either vanquiſhed or reduced to the humiliating condition of acting only on the defenſive, prevailed upon Spain to eſpouſe her cauſe; but it was our pride and our ſecurity to have a miniſter,† at that time,

† The late Earl of Chatham.

who

who was equal to the taſk of conducting us through all difficulties, and ſurmounting all obſtacles.

To be ſenſible of what we have loſt, it will be neceſſary to recite what we poſſeſſed.

In the year 1762, we were in poſſeſſion of the entire continent of America, from Penſacola to Hudſon's Bay, the Eaſt and Weſt-Indies, and an uninterrupted commerce with the known world; the protectors of Portugal, and complete maſters of the ſea—The vigilance of our cruizers had almoſt deſtroyed the maritime trade of our proſtrate enemies, and the very little which remained to France was ſcarcely deſerving of the name of commerce. In this ſituation was Great Britain, when France and Spain, exhauſted, diſgraced, and defeated, in Europe, Aſia, and America, ſued to her for peace.

Our ſucceſſes, laſt war, had been carried to a height, which paſt ages had never ſeen; to a height, which the preſent generation had never imagined, and to which poſterity will ſcarce give credit. Animated by repeated victories, our troops became invincible, and under the ſpirited adminiſtration of Mr. Pitt, we had nearly attained the ſummit of earthly grandeur, when the Earl of Bute ſtepped forward with his peace of Paris, and in one moment deſtroyed the ſplendid advantages, which the wiſdom and magnanimity of his predeceſſor had with equal difficulty and glory acquired.

It was then that gathering clouds darkened the political atmoſphere, and preſaged the certain, though diſtant approach of thoſe tempeſts, which have ſince ſhaken the Britiſh empire to its foundation. The zeal of the miniſter, who had forced himſelf into an office, for which he was unqualified in every reſpect, was not leſs conſpicuous for preſerving peace than it had been for the obtaining it; and if the intereſts of the nation had been diſregarded in the former inſtance, the honour and dignity of it has been ſacrificed in the latter.

This pacific reſolution of the Britiſh court, encouraged France very early, after the war, to diſturb our ſalt-works on Turk's Iſland. Spain afterwards had the audacity to capture one of his majeſty's ſhips of war, in the South Seas, whoſe rudder ſhe unſhipped, and to erect her enſigns over

over thoſe of England, which till then had been triumphant.* Complaints were tranſmitted from the governor of Jamaica † of the outrages of the French, and they were ſubmiſſively repreſented to the French miniſter, who at laſt promiſed, that no farther interruption ſhould be given to our ſettlers.

The inſolence of Spain, excluſive of her injuſtice in refuſing to pay the ranſom ſtipulated in the treaty of peace,‡ deſerved the chaſtiſement of the ſword, but the miniſter, obliged to adhere to his inſtructions, offered the moſt humiliating conceſſions, and made a voluntary ſurrender of an iſland,§ to which we were entitled by the rights of conqueſt and diſcovery. All Europe beheld with aſtoniſhment and indignaion, the deſpicable and puſilanimous determination of our councils. We ſubmitted to Spain, and temporiſed with France; but whenever a diſpoſition appeared in the people at home, or in the diſtant provinces, to defend their rights againſt parliamentary or regal encroachments, the drums beat to arms, and the

* The late Sir C. Saunders, who was alſo driven from the councils of his ſovereign and the ſervice of his country, declared on that occaſion, that Madrid in aſhes would not compenſate for the inſult offered to the Britiſh flag.

† In the years 1764 and 1765, from Sir W. Henry Littleton, now Lord Weſtcote.

‡ Sir William Draper, and the brave companions of his victories and glory, were compelled, after various applications, to give up the Manilla ranſom,* for the expreſs purpoſe, as was acknowledged at the time, of preſerving a *good underſtanding* with the court of Spain. Theſe ſacrifices muſt ſurely convince the moſt obſtinate mind, that the preſervation of peace was a principal object with the crown, to which the motley ſucceſſion of whig and tory miniſters were obliged to conform, as the *ſine qua non* of their continuing in office. Peace was to be preſerved at all events; and as the more important conſiderations of national honour and national intereſt were forced to ſubmit to it, we may venture to conclude, without any great violence to truth and probability, that a ſincere deſire of remaining in perfect good-humour with the powers of Europe was not the ONLY motive of this extraordinary conduct.

§ Falkland's Iſland, in the year 1771, in which great warlike preparations were made, and ſupplies demanded of parliament, under the pretence of ſupporting the honour of the Britiſh flag, and puniſhing the perfidy and inſolence of Spain, but the money which was granted at that time remains yet to be accounted for.

* Four million of dollars.

ſodiery

ſoldiery were ordered out, under the fallacious pretence of preſerving the conſtitution.*

The negociation for peace ſhould have had for its principal object, an indemnity from future hoſtilities, an indemnity which might have been obtained, as it was in our power to have dictated terms worthy of the conqueſts we had made; but the avidity with which the overtures for an accommodation were accepted at St. James's, and the indecent alacrity with which we agreed to treat with the courts of Verſailles and Madrid, gave our vanquiſhed foes what their combined forces could never have obtained. It is this peace, ſo inadequate to the war which preceded it, and ſo incompatible with our intereſt and ſecurity, that has enabled perfidious Gaul to guarantee the independence of our revolted colonies, and to menace us with an invaſion.

Poſterity will judge, from this ruinous and diſhonourable peace, of the character of *that* prince, who, ſucceeding to the empire of a great nation, at the very moment in which ſhe had almoſt attained the ſummit of human glory, could give up, without concern, the many advantages which had been obtained at the expence of ſo much blood and treaſure, and expoſe himſelf to future inſult and danger. Hiſtorians, at the diſtance of a century, in compiling the annals of this reign, may perhaps reproach the ſovereign with having aſcended the throne under prejudices unfavourable to the conſtitutional rights of his ſubjects; with ſentiments incompatible with the obligations of a limited monarch, and, that being more intent on *domeſtic* than on *foreign* conqueſt, he was anxious to obtain a peace at all events, that he might be more at leiſure to carry his deſigns into execution. Theſe ſuggeſtions, however erroneous they may be, will undoubtedly receive conſiderable ſupport from the character of the man to whom the important charge of his education had been committed.

* It has ever been an invariable maxim among princes deſirous of reducing or of ſuppreſſing the generous ſpirit of freedom in their ſubjects, to preſerve peace with other nations, that the exerciſe of *domeſtic tyranny* might not be interrupted or prevented by foreign wars; and whenever ſuch a diſpoſition appears in the firſt magiſtrate of a free ſtate, it ſhould be immediately reſiſted, as the power ariſing from the loſs of liberty is ſilent, ſlow, and permanent.

The Earl of Bute, under whoſe care his Majeſty had been placed in early life, had neither a capacity equal to the taſk of inſtructing a prince deſtined to govern a warlike and commercial nation, nor a diſpoſition to render himſelf even tolerable to thoſe with whom he was likely, from his ſituation, to be connected; and poſterity will be apt to judge of the views and expectations of the ſovereign, more from the characters of thoſe who were connected with him in his infancy, and who poſſeſſed his confidence in maturer life, than from his own particular conduct, which, upon moſt occaſions, muſt have been regulated by the eſtabliſhed laws of the kingdom, or, at leaſt, tempered by a real or an *affected* reſpect to the prejudices of the people, which it is neither prudent nor ſafe to violate or offend. It is, however, to be lamented, that the character of a prince, amiable and reſpectable as it is ſaid to be in private life, ſhould hereafter be drawn from that of an unworthy favourite, to whom he was perhaps more attached from habit than from inclination, and to whom he is indebted for all the diſorders of his reign.

Gloomy and auſtere in private life; deſpotic in the management of his family even to oppreſſion, and averſe, from pride, to that eaſe and familiarity which at once ſweeten and diſtinguiſh domeſtic ſociety, the Earl of Bute was called forth, if not from poverty, at leaſt from obſcurity, into active life, to educate a prince in the arts of empire!—The folly of ſuch a choice is of itſelf without example or excuſe; but when it ſhall be ſeriouſly recollected how miſchievous the effects of ſuch a guardianſhip may be in its conſequences to both prince and people, we muſt look farther for the cauſe of ſo extraordinary an election, than in the mere partiality of a woman*: his Lordſhip was indeed converſant in the claſſics; but his knowledge being confined to the dead languages, qualified him only for the office of a ſchoolmaſter, for which nature alſo ſeems to have intended him, if the accident of a noble birth had not placed him in a ſituation which gave him rank and conſequence, with the power of doing miſchief.

His intolerable arrogance to the Engliſh nobility, who neglected or refuſed to pay their court to him, and more eſpecially to thoſe† who

* The late Princeſs Dowager of Wales.

† The late Dukes of Newcaſtle and Devonſhire, the former of whom he treated with unpardonable rudeneſs. After having agreed to meet him, through the friendly mediation of the late Earl of Eglington, whoſe zeal to accompliſh a coalition, had no other effect, than to encreaſe his inſolence.

had

had diſtinguiſhed themſelves in facilitating the elevation of the Brunſwick family to the Britiſh Throne; his being tranſplanted immediately from the *nurſery* to the *cabinet*, and taking not only an active part, but abſolutely the entire lead in public affairs, will unqueſtionably influence the deciſions of poſterity, with reſpect to the object of the meaſures of the preſent reign, as well as on the character of the prince; eſpecially when it will appear on record, that all the great offices of ſtate, and even the meaneſt employments in the gift of the crown, were divided among his miſerable partizans, or beſtowed on his hungry countrymen, who, deſerting their own barren and inhoſpitable mountains, emigrated in legions to the metropolis, and were inſtantly provided for.

The indecent manner in which Mr. Pitt was removed from power, and the whole of his magnificent ſyſtem of politics changed, for the expreſs purpoſe of making room for a man ſo unequal in every reſpect to ſucceed him, was more than ſufficient to give univerſal offence. The one was deſervedly the idol of the whole nation, while the other, from his behaviour to the firſt characters in the kingdom, and his attachment to principles inimical to the rights of the people, was already become the object of univerſal deteſtation and contempt. No wonder, then that his meaſures and his principles were arraigned in the ſenate, and expoſed in print: but the oppoſition which he met with, ſerved only to advance him in the eſtimation of his ſovereign, who had been taught to conſider every attack on his favourite as an inſult offered to himſelf.* The repreſentatives of the people, who held offices under the crown, and who had the virtue and reſolution to refuſe an implicit confidence in the fidelity and

* Auguſtus Cæſar, who was certainly one of the greateſt and happieſt of princes, whenever he was informed that his perſon and edicts were treated with too much freedom in the ſenate, replied, that *in civitate liberâ linguas quoque civium liberas eſſe oportere.*

The reader is deſired to compare the candor and liberality of the Roman emperor with the conduct of the preſent time, without regard to the filthy licentiouſneſs of the daily prints, in which miniſters and parliament are applauded and abuſed by vulgar profligate ſcribblers, who write for hire, and who praiſe and cenſure without the ſmalleſt reſpect to truth or decency. It is from the particular conduct of the prince and of his miniſters, that we muſt diſcover how far freedom of ſpeech in the people is agreeable to the royal temper; and if we find that an oppoſition, *in* or *out* of parliament, to the meaſures of the latter, is not conſidered as diſaffection to the perſon of the former, nor a diſpoſition ſhewn by either of them to puniſh or reſent it, we may then venture to conclude, that as the ſovereign has not the *power*, neither has he the *inclination* to aboliſh or controul the right of the ſubject to inveſtigate the conduct of his government.

abilities of this miniſter, where diſmiſſed without ceremony. This ſtep alone, even under a popular adminiſtration, would have excited a general alarm, for however juſt or expedient the meaſures of a miniſter may be, it is a direct violation of the conſtitutional rights of the people, and a very dangerous exerciſe of the prerogative to puniſh the *ſenator* in the *officer*, and particularly as that puniſhment is not only marked, in the firſt inſtance, with wantonneſs and injuſtice, but ſeems levelled directly at the very freedom and independance of parliament.

There are very few points on which an aſſembly, conſiſting of five hundred perſons, promiſcuouſly choſen from eight millions, will be unanimous.

Thoſe truths, which obtain univerſal and immediate credit with the multitude, muſt be very ſimple and obvious indeed; and in politics, where almoſt as many different opinions prevail as there are individuals, it is folly in the extreme, or *ſomething worſe*, to expect unanimity; but the miniſter alluded to, did not confine himſelf merely to *expectation*.—It was his intereſt, as it muſt be of every man in his ſituation, to have the concurrence of the whole legiſlature to his meaſures, but he diſdained to gain their aſſent on the board baſis of *public utility*. He was ſuperior to the trouble of convincing their underſtandings, and became *peremptory*. He even proceeded to coercion, and armed with the power of the crown, puniſhed thoſe who oppoſed him, by diſmiſſing them from their civil or military employments. Here was, in fact, a denial of the right of parliament to diſſent from the confidential ſervants of the prince, or to inveſtigate the juſtice or policy of their public conduct; and when we recollect the high authority, under which this right was denied, it muſt be confeſſed, that the apprehenſions of the people were not *ill-founded* *.

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* When the queſtion of general warrants was brought on in the Houſe of Commons, the honourable Henry Seymour Conway voted againſt the legality of them, and for that vote he was diſmiſſed from his military command, and told; that the king had no farther command for his ſervices. Neither diſaffection to the ſovereign, or miſconduct as an officer, could be, or even was alledged againſt him, as the cauſe of his diſmiſſion. He had faithfully and conſcientiouſly diſcharged his duty to his conſtituents in parliament; and this conduct, which ought to have endeared him to the prince, as it did to the nation, was regarded as an attack on the royal prerogative, and puniſhed as ſeverely as the

limited

The partizans of adminiſtration will, perhaps, object, that this is an old and beaten path, that it is a ſubject long ſince exhauſted, and ought to be conſigned for ever to oblivion.

Theſe objections, however, are frivolous, as well as unjuſt, as an attempt in any miniſter to controul the voice of parliament, ſhould neither be forgotten nor forgiven; but a principal reaſon for repeating this circumſtance, is merely to illuſtrate an important truth, which experience hath fatally confirmed: *That the principles, on which this reign commenced, were faulty, and that there was an unnatural, as well as an impolitic bias, in the education of the* PRINCE OF WALES, *which has been the ſource of much ſubſequent uneaſineſs to the* KING, *and of miſchief to this kingdom.*

At this time, the Solicitor and Attorney Generals, thoſe ready inſtruments of tyranny, were called forth as auxilaries to the vengeance of the miniſter. Proſecutions were inſtituted in the courts of juſtice againſt authors, printers, and publiſhers. The powerful arm of authority was raiſed, not to protect, but to oppreſs the ſubject; and even the ſovereign deſcended to a conteſt with an individual, who had oppoſed his favourite.

This extraordinary and diſgraceful conduct, ſo incompatible with the regal dignity, far from intimidating, ſerved only to excite the popular fury; and Mr. Wilkes, taking the conſtitution for his guide, had the ſa-

limited power of the crown would admit. * This deſpicable inſtance of a mean and pitiful revenge proved a diſpoſition to be *deſpotic*, without the means of gratifying it.

The queſtion itſelf was an attempt at deſpotiſm; and if the miniſter had ſucceeded, we may judge of the rigor and frequency, with which the aſſumed power would have been exerted, by the intemperance of his reſentment to thoſe who voted againſt it. Our houſes at midnight would have been ſubject to the attacks of armed ruffians, acting under the authority, and at the pleaſure of a ſecretary of ſtate; Newgate and the Tower would have been filled, perhaps, with members from both Houſes of Parliament, and their papers expoſed to the impertinent curioſity of clerks in office, and this attempt to give additional weight to the crown, is the leſs excuſable, as the conſtitution has provided very amply for every purpoſe of fair and legal government: but the diſmiſſion of General Conway, General A'Court, and afterwards of Sir Percy Brett, from their employments, becauſe they voted in the Houſe of Commons againſt a queſtion of the miniſter, is ſuch a flagrant act of injuſtice, that in times leſs temperate than the preſent, the reſentment of the people would have extended *beyond* the ſatrifice of the miniſter.

tisfaction

tisfaction to obtain a glorious triumph over the whole power and influence of the crown, which had been exerted only to deſtroy him.

It is perhaps more dangerous, than difficult, to ſtate the reaſons, which could induce a prince, till that time, revered and beloved by the whole nation, to deſcend to a warfare with one of his people, and to exert the entire force of his authority, to cruſh and deſtroy a man, whoſe only crime had been *defending the liberty of the ſubject againſt illegal violence.* Such an interference in a free ſtate, is not indeed unprecedented, but it is altogether unpardonable. In an abſolute monarchy, where the ſovereign can ſay with impunity, *ſic volo, ſic jubeo*, it may not be very prudent to diſpute with him; but in this country, where public meaſures have been, and, we truſt, ever will be, open to the free and impartial diſcuſſion of all ranks of men, and more eſpecially of both Houſes of Parliament, to whom the diſcuſſion of all public meaſures more immediately and conſtitutionally belongs, it muſt be matter of equal ſurpriſe and indignation, to ſee the firſt magiſtrate deſcending from his imperial throne, with all the rays of royalty collected, to awe his ſubjects into a blind obedience to his will. Commitments, informations *ex officio*, diſmiſſions from places of truſt and profit; the expulſion of obnoxious members from parliament, by means of a corrupt majority, and a whole train of vexatious expedients were in vain exerted, to ſubdue the ſteady and manly oppoſition of a ſingle individual. He triumphed over the ill-directed malice of power, unſupported by law and juſtice, and exhibited another inſtance to the world of the animating ſuperiority of our free conſtitution.

By endeavouring to ſuppreſs that ſpirit of freedom, which is the characteriſtic of this nation, a ſpirit of jealouſy was excited, accompanied by a ſpirit of reſentment, and the preſs, which had hitherto preſerved great good temper, and the ſtricteſt decorum, with reſpect to *private characters*, broke forth into the wideſt extravagance and licentiouſneſs. An attempt to ſilence it, had made it outrageous, and by diſputing the moderate and legal exerciſe of its power, it became hoſtile and tyrannical to all orders of men:* hence we muſt account for the daily abuſe, which we read in the public

* It is as beneath the dignity, as it is diſtant from the deſign, of this publication, to deſcend to a controverſy with the numerous daily papers; but the licentious freedoms which

public prints, and for the impunity, which a herd of vagabond ſcribblers, under the different denominations of editors, eſſay-writers, and news-collectors, find for the outrages they commit againſt the domeſtic repoſe of individuals, and againſt which the laws have not provided an ample ſecurity. This may be conſidered as one of the many evils, which have reſulted from a wanton and illegal attempt at inordinate power.

But to return. The commencement of the preſent reign exhibited the moſt flattering proſpect of future happineſs and glory. The nation was intemperate in its joy, at ſeeing a Britiſh prince once more in poſſeſſion of the regal ſceptre, and they were confirmed in the favourable ſentiments which they had formed, by the judges being declared independent.

Princes ſeldom give up their power, but with reluctance; on the contrary, they are more anxious to extend, than to part with it; and whenever they ſacrifice their prerogative, it is for purpoſes not very favourable to the rights of the people, and which they dare not immediately avow. This meaſure has been extolled by proſtitute writers, as an inſtance of

which have been taken with the firſt characters in the ſtate, often unjuſtly, and always wantonly and malevolently, have long been complained of. The preſs indeed began to deliver itſelf with leſs reſtraint after the period of Mr. Wilkes's return from Paris, in 1768, than before, but the public conduct of miniſters was only canvaſſed; no innovaſion of the domeſtic repoſe of individuals was attempted, till lately, when a paper was ſet up under the management of a man of vulgar and obſcure birth, the principal object of which was to diſcover to the world the myſteries of private life.

Having no character of his own to loſe, it was the leſs likely that he ſhould feel any regard for the character of others.—Neither rank, condition, nor innocence itſelf, was exempt from his abuſe: and even defenceleſs women found no ſecurity in their ſex againſt his unprovoked ſlander. The athletic arm of the *bravo* vindicated, upon all occaſions, the lawleſs aſſaſſin of reputations; and he literally fought his way from obſcurity and indigence, into notice and competency, or rather into affluence, conſidering his mean origin and neceſſitous condition. This man, whoſe chief buſineſs hath been to deſtroy the peace of private families, it is ſaid, has a penſion from the ſtate, and whenever a miniſter in this country is reduced to the humiliating neceſſity of employing the baſeſt of mankind to defend his meaſures and ſupport his adminiſtration, by impoſing fallacies, evading what he cannot deny, and miſrepreſenting truth, his cauſe muſt be deſperate, whatever his deſigns or his capacity may be, and he becomes an object of our pity more than of our reſentment.

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the extreme veneration, with which the prince regards the conſtitution, and as an indiſputable teſtimony of his patriotiſm and generoſity.

It was indeed ſpecious, and very little pains were required to give it weight with the multitude, whoſe eaſy credulity was impoſed upon, and who, in return, rewarded their ſovereign with the moſt unlimited confidence. But it did not occur to them, that the office of chancellor, by affording hereditary honours, held out a temptation, againſt which few minds, and eſpecially weak minds, are proof, and that it was a *trap-door*, through which the judges were to fall, whenever they diſcovered a diſpoſition to oppoſe the crown;* neither did they recollect, that the judges are uſually ſelected from the law officers of ſtate, or, that benefits *conferred*, exact *favours* in return.

This act of apparent generoſity, which afforded no additional, or at leaſt no important ſecurity againſt the power of the crown, was unqueſtionably a popular meaſure, and extremely well calculated to ſecure the confidence of the nation, if an inglorious peace, an encreaſe of taxes, and an extenſion of the exciſe laws, had not immediately followed this impious mockery of patriotiſm, and expoſed the principles and object of the new ſyſtem of politics, which had been adopted in direct contradiction to his Majeſty's poſitive declaration to his firſt parliament.† "*The preſent critical and difficult conjuncture, has made* "*this loſs*" (the late king) "*the more ſenſible, as he was the great ſupport* "*of* THAT *ſyſtem, by which* ALONE *the liberties of Europe, and the weight* "*and influence of theſe kingdoms can be* PRESERVED, *and give life to meaſures* "*conducive to thoſe important ends.*"

* Lord Chief Juſtice Pratt was made chancellor, and created a peer, ſoon after he had diſcharged Mr. Wilkes, and had declared the warrant of his commitment illegal. He has now no more than a ſolitary vote in parliament, which the new ſyſtem of politics has taken care to render of no conſequence, when oppoſed to the meaſures of government. A judge of leſs integrity and more art may, indeed, refuſe the ſeals and retain his power, in order to dictate to miniſters and provide for his beggarly family and dependants, but ſuch a judge is not likely to deſerve the confidence of the people.

† King's Speech, to his firſt parliament.

Tumultuous

Tumultuous plaudits, ariſing from ſentiments of loyalty and affection in a grateful people to a native prince, were no longer heard. A doubtful ſilence prevailed throughout the Britiſh dominions, till the illegal ſeizure of Mr. Wilkes finally decided the hitherto equivocal conduct of the miniſtry, and excited a general alarm. Neither the unwelcome reception which it met with from all ranks of men, the univerſal clamour it occaſioned, nor the ſolemn condemnation, which it publicly received from a virtuous and intrepid judge,* could abate the furious reſentment of the favourite.

A meſſage, replete with anger and duplicity, was delivered, in 1763, from the King to the Commons, by the chancellor of the Exchequer, in expectation of obtaining a vote of cenſure on this ſelected object for royal and miniſterial vengeance, and the Commons, in obedience to the imperial wiſh, did all that they dared to do, or that an enraged miniſter could with decency require. This act of oppreſſion, notwithſtanding the countenance with which it was honored by parliament, was regarded as an experiment on the temper of the people, as a bold attempt in favour of deſpotiſm, but it was too violent to paſs unnoticed or unrepelled.

It is poſſible, that we may be betrayed into a ſurrender of our liberties, but the ſpirit of this country is not yet ſo reduced as to admit of its being taken by a *coup de main*. The mode of attack was therefore inſtantly changed, and inſtead of *force*, recourſe was had to *art*. It was thought eaſier to *corrupt* than to *ſubdue*, and a *venal parliament* would anſwer every purpoſe of a *ſtanding army*, without being either ſo expenſive, obnoxious, or dangerous.

Seats in the Houſe of Commons, which before the Revolution in 1688, were only ſolicited, and ſeldom conteſted, have gradually encreaſed their conſequence, becauſe they have been found *profitable*; even men with a capacity only to *affirm* and *deny*, find a ready market for the now valuable monoſyllables of *Yes* and *No*, and avow themſelves penſioners to the miniſtry. Boroughs are ſought after with avidity, and thoſe which remain unſold to government, are graſped at by men of low birth, who, having amaſſed fortunes in India, and become deſirous of obliterating all remembrance

* Lord Camden, then Lord Chief Juſtice of the Common Pleas.

of their original meanneſs, devote themſelves to the miniſtry, as the moſt effectual means of obtaining thoſe honorary diſtinctions, which never fail to dazzle and amuſe the vulgar.

The extraordinary inundation of wealth from the Eaſt, has contributed to encreaſe the venality and coruption of parliament beyond the example of former ages. Country gentlemen, who had a natural and hereditary intereſt in the boroughs which they repreſented, were attacked by thoſe exotics, and unable to contend againſt the profuſion of their unprincipled opponents, were compelled either to ſolicit the protection of miniſtry, or to give up their ſeats: This contributed to ſtrengthen the power of the crown, and to extend its influence over the whole repreſentative body, Yet this was not the only evil, which it occaſioned; it acquired an influence over our manners, and even effected a change in them, of which notice will be taken more particularly hereafter.

The facility, with which immenſe fortunes were obtained in the Eaſt, held out irreſiſtible temptations to the neceſſitous and avaricious; and whilſt Indoſtan could produce a roupee, there was annual export and import of adventures.

This traffic, which was carried on for a ſeries of years, brought conſiderable wealth into the nation, and produced infinite miſchief. Debauched by the magnificence of Eaſtern manners, theſe gentry, on their return, affected to deſpiſe the wholeſome, ſobriety and frugality of their native country. The moſt ſumptuous habitations and entertainments, equally deſtitute of taſte and œconomy, were become abſolutely neceſſary, and their dreſs and pleaſures were equally expenſive.

The honeſt pride of the old Engliſh nobility was mortified, at being eclipſed, nor could they ſubmit to have their conſequence leſſened, and ſometimes ſuperſeded, in the country where they had been always reſpected, and eſpecially, by men who had probably been domeſtics in their very families. Unwilling to be outdone, they were ſeduced into expences, beyond their ability to ſupport. Theſe unequal conteſts ſo imprudent and deſtructive, frequently terminated in the ſale of their eſtates, which

were

were purchaſed by thoſe Aſiatic plunderers, who had ſet them an example of extravagance, for that very purpoſe, perhaps. The country-gentlemen became alarmed for their property and influence; the middle and lower orders of men were aggrieved by the advanced price of proviſions, which the moſt wanton profuſion and waſte had occaſioned, while all of them, without exception, imitated, to the very extent of their incomes and credit, the extravagance which they reprobated and condemned.

No wonder then, that property ſhifted hands, and that indigence followed cloſe upon the heels of folly and diſſipation. Public ſpirit in ſome, and envy and reſentment in others, at laſt promoted a parliamentary enquiry into the conduct of the moſt conſpicuous of thoſe who had amaſſed princely fortunes. Committees were appointed by the Houſe of Commons, who certainly did juſtice to the truſt repoſed in them, by diſcovering a ſeries of unexampled villainies, which called loudly for national vengeance. So flagrant and enormous was the guilt of the delinquents, that even government ſhrunk from them in the moment of trial and of danger, and artfully avoided giving them that countenance, which it wiſhed to do. The Commons, however, more merciful, or leſs ſcrupulous, to the aſtoniſhment of truth, and the whole world, ſtood between the culprits, and the puniſhment due to their crimes, and conſigned their own memories to everlaſting infamy!

The ghoſts of thirty thouſand Gentoos, who periſhed by a famine, artfully created by the refined cruelty of a European,* intent only on fraud

* The Gentoos, confiding in the doctrines of Pythagoras, believe in the metempſychoſis, and live entirely on vegetables, and particularly on rice, which is their principal ſupport. They are the moſt virtuous and inoffenſive people in the world, and perhaps the only nation in which that admirable moral maxim of "*do unto others as we would have others do unto us,*" is obſerved with religious fidelity; but the ſimplicity of their manners could not preſerve them from the rapacity of European adventures, who, for the laſt century, have taken infinite pains to impoveriſh and exterminate them. Among thoſe of our countrymen who have taken an active part in theſe mercileſs tragedies, and diſgraced us in Indoſtan, is a Mr. SYKES, who, from the humble condition of a menial ſervant in England, emigrated to India, where he acquired both wealth and power. It was the ingenuity of this man, who contrived a monopoly of rice, by which he was enabled to return to Europe with a fortune of half a million ſterling, ſtained with the innocent blood of thirty thouſand of his fellow-creatures, whom his unfeeling avarice had compelled to die of hunger.

and rapine, with that of Omichund, who fell a victim to the inhuman artifices of a man,† who had waded through blood to riches and to power, pleaded in vain for retribution: a venal ſenate, loſt to every ſenſe of dignity and virtue, exculpated the affluent authors of theſe barbarities, and became partners in their guilt! The deciſion which they gave, ſo obviouſly unjuſt, exhibits another melancholy proof of the corruption of the times, and of the ill effects ariſing from the extraordinary wealth, which flowed in upon us from India, ſince it enabled a few deſpicable individuals to bribe a majority of the repreſentative body, and by that means obtain a guilty triumph over the juſtice and laws of their country.* With a parliament compoſed of ſuch characters, ſo venal and ſo indigent, what may we not apprehend? Every miſchief is to be dreaded; and when we hear thoſe very men; thoſe penſioned confederates againſt liberty and the conſtitution, inſiſting at once on the *infallibility* and *omnipotence* of parliament, and the people as readily ſubſcribing to both theſe dogmas, what ſecurity have

† The death of Omichund is an authenticated fact, the author of which, after having eſcaped the vengeance of his country, and withſtood the teſt of a parliamentary enquiry, could not withſtand the ſcrutinizing teſt of his own conſcience, but fell, unpitied even by ſycophants and dependants, a miſerable victim to remorſe and deſpair, by terminating, with his own hand, a life which had excited at once the odium and aſtoniſhment of mankind.

* The quantum which was given to each member who voted in the laſt parliament in favour of the Aſiatic plunderers, can be beſt aſcertained by the pert, prim lawyer, to whoſe ingenious management the defence of the late Lord Clive was entirely ſubmitted, and who, it is ſaid, has *bargined* to juſtify the aſſaſſination of the late lord Pigot for the *moderate* ſum of THIRTY THOUSAND POUNDS!

The zeal of this gentleman rendered him inſenſible to the dignity of the character in which he appeared on that celebrated day when his eloquence was ſo uſeful to his affluent and guilty clients. He ſhould have recollected, that he appeared in the Houſe of Commons not as a *ſoliciter* but as a SENATOR;

That he was paſſing JUDGMENT in the national aſſembly in quality of a LEGISLATOR, and not pleading in Weſtminſter-Hall among his fraternity, of whom it may be ſaid "*Iras et verba locant*" with a brief in one hand and a fee in the other. The meanneſs and baſeneſs of accepting of a pecuniary gratuity upon that occaſion can only be equalled by his unparallelled aſſurance in ſtanding up before God, his country and the world, the mercenary advocate of ROBBERS and of MURDERERS!

have

have we againſt the treachery of an obſequious ſenate, but in the virtue or *incapacity* of the prince? †

To proceed regularly with the innumerable facts, in the order of time as they happened, would ſwell theſe remarks into a volume; we will therefore paſs over the general proceedings of miniſters, ſince the Earl of Bute was driven, by the public voice, from the councils of his ſovereign, as well as over the particular conduct of individuals, who have diſtinguiſhed and taken to themſelves the name of the "*King's Friends.*" We ſhall alſo paſs over a ſeries of years, in order to come immediately to the preſent adminiſtration, whoſe meaſures have deranged the politics of all Europe, and given birth to an empire, which bids fair to give laws to the reſt of the world.

When it was his Majeſty's pleaſure to honour the preſent miniſters with his royal confidence, we were in poſſeſſion of our American colonies; in

† The following letter, extracted from the parliamentary debates in the year 1701, and compared with the conduct of the preſent time, is a proof of the great change which has taken place in the minds of the people, as well as of the zeal and intrepidity with which our anceſtors acted whenever the conſtitution was attacked. It was accompanied with fifteen articles of grievances, and eight for the approbation of the commons. The bold and deciſive language in which it is written, proves that virtue and patriotiſm were then regarded as obligations of duty, and muſt raiſe a bluſh in the preſent generation, for their want of unanimity and principle, at a time when judges have dared to twiſt and expound the laws to oppreſs the ſubject, and when miniſters, under the pretext of *expediency* and *ſtate neceſſity*, violate Magna Charta, and trample on the conſtitution, without ceremony, and almoſt without reſerve.

"*Mr. Speaker,*

"*The incloſed memorial you are charged with in the behalf of many thouſands of the good people of England. There is neither Popiſh, Jacobite, ſeditious, court, nor party intereſt concerned in it, but honeſty and truth. You are* COMMANDED, *by two hundred thouſand Engliſhmen, to deliver it to the houſe of Commons, and to inform them that it is no banter, but ſerious truth, and a ſerious regard to it is expected. Nothing but juſtice and their duty is required of them; and it is required by thoſe who have both a* RIGHT *to require and a power to* COMPEL—*viz.*—*THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND*—*We could have come to the houſe ſtrong enough to have obliged them to hear us; but we have avoided any tumults, not deſiring to* embroil, *but to ſave, our country. If you refuſe to communicate it to them, you will have cauſe, in a ſhort time, to repent it.*

Our name is
LEGION, and we are MANY.

To Robert Harley, Eſq.
Speaker of the Houſe of Commons.

profound

profound peace, and enjoying an uninterrupted commerce with the known nations of the earth; the revenues were encreaſed, and the riches, which flowed in upon us from all parts of the globe, ought to have been applied to the diſcharge of the heavy debts, which had been contracted in the preceding war, and which would certainly have had ſuch an application under an adminiſtration, directed by principles of common prudence and common honeſty; but there were obligations of another nature to be diſcharged, and other purſuits, for which the overplus of public money was required, notwithſtanding the parade of œconomy which was made, and the reform which actually took place in the expences of the royal houſehold * of the ſovereign, as if a ſingular and permanent ſyſtem of frugality had been ſeriouſly adopted. It was reaſonable to have ſuppoſed, that the revenues, which had been found equal to the enormous expences of a great military eſtabliſhment, in time of war, would have been adequate to every exigency of government, in time of profound peace. The growing family of his Majeſty indeed demanded ſome extraordinary proviſion, but not ſufficient to encreaſe the burthen of the people, who had ſuſtained ſo chearfully and manfully the load of taxes, which had been levied to ſupport a war in every quarter of the globe, againſt the moſt formidable powers in Europe; whether it was profuſion, or incapacity in the ſeveral miniſters, which ſucceeded each other in the early part of this reign,* or whether the inſatiate rapacity of the Commons demanded more of miniſters, for ſupporting them with their votes, than miniſters, or rather the nation could afford, is a queſtion of very little

* The frivolous arrangements of the lord ſteward, Talbot, in the royal kitchen, and other departments of the houſehold, were more ſuitable to the limited circumſtances of an inſignificant tradeſman, than to the ample revenue of a Britiſh prince. From this œconomy in domeſtic matters, we were authoriſed to hope that it would have been exerciſed in more important affairs; but the recent demands of the crown, and the liberal ſupplies of the commons, prove that we have been inſulted and amuſed with notions of frugality, while the groſſeſt profuſion and moſt wanton extravagance have prevailed through every department of the ſtate.

* It is worthy of obſervation, that, for the firſt eight years after his Majeſty aſcended the throne, every gazette announced to the world, either a new miniſter, or a change in the firſt offices of ſtate. Whether this proceeded from a natural inconſtancy of temper in the ſovereign, or from the difficulty which he met with in finding a ſet of men abjectedly and totally devoted to his royal will, is a circumſtance which I ſhall leave to be collected from the general tenor of his government. It is certain, that the whole peerage has been ranſacked for miniſters, and the final choice which his Majeſty has at laſt been graciouſly pleaſed to make, no longer marks his deſigns as *equivocal*.

import.

import. It will be readily acknowledged, that we have had miniſters unequal to the duty required of them, as well as wanton and laviſh in the expenditure of public money, and that we have alſo had repreſentatives, who have bargained away their honour, violated their truſt, and entailed miſchiefs on their country, which even time can never repair: who have even aſcertained the value of votes between themſelves and their conſtituents, as well as between themſelves and miniſters, and who have meant nothing more by coming into parliament, than to aggrandize themſelves and families. So ſcandalous a deviation from the ſpirit of our conſtitution, ſo infamous a proſtitution of character, and ſuch a total contempt of all decency, muſt endanger the very exiſtence of our free government, and in the end deſtroy the credit of parliament with the body of the people, who, enraged at the abuſe of ſo noble, ſo magnificent, and ſo independent an inſtitution, may be tempted in the moment of reſentment to aboliſh them entirely, and confide altogether in the integrity of the prince, rather than in four or five hundred mercenaries, under the denomination of Peers and Repreſentatives.

The recruiting of an exhauſted treaſury, and providing for the exigencies of a future war, were conſiderations to which our miniſters would never condeſcend. To provide for the preſent moment, regardleſs of diſtant events, was the ultimate object of their wiſhes, and very often the utmoſt extent of their abilities. The buſineſs of one adminiſtration was to undo what had been done by the preceding one, and the contemptible animoſities of individuals were pitifully blended with a diſapprobation of public meaſures.—Laws were enacted in one ſeſſion and repealed the next, and in this ſlovenly and diſgraceful manner were public matters conducted, when an event, which took place in the year 1765, gave a turn to Britiſh politics, and prepared the way for the revolution which has ſince happened.

It excited the clamour of thirteen colonies againſt the authority of the mother-country, and inſtructing them, for the firſt time, how to oppoſe the power of parliament with ſucceſs, furniſhed them with an idea of independence, which they have ſince improved and eſtabliſhed, beyond our ability to deſtroy. The event, alluded to, is the attempt which was made to derive a revenue from America; but the mode in which it was demanded being conſidered as unconſtitutional, the whole continent united, and, with equal anger and indecency, declared taxation by England an outrage

rage againſt their inherent, as well as againſt their chartered rights. The timidity of the miniſter at home afforded impunity to riots and diſorders abroad. The repreſentatives of majeſty were menaced and inſulted by mobs, and the dignity of government ſacrificed to the inſolent claims of a tumultuous rabble.

A correſpondence was eſtabliſhed from Boſton to Charles-Town, for the better defence of public liberty, in which men of all principles and perſuaſions engaged without diſtinction or reſerve; The gloomy and ſelfiſh fanatics of Maſſachuſets Bay, and the northern colonies, neither felt nor expreſſed a reluctance to join with the volatile and diſſipated inhabitants of Carolina and Virginia—The rigid Preſbyterian, the fanatic diſciples of Whitefield, the bigot Catholic, and the Deiſt, aſſociated together, and forgetting, or rather abandoning, thoſe religious ſentiments which had hitherto ſeparated and taught them to regard each other as enemies, united as brethren, and unanimouſly adopted one creed in politics, to the truth of which they have chearfully ſubſcribed and adhered. So immediate and extraordinary an union of three millions of people, whoſe intereſts and whoſe manners differed ſo widely muſt have proceeded from an ill-judged exertion of illegal power, The ſtamp act, however, which had excited this furious oppoſition, was repealed, and peace, without confidence, reſtored to the enraged provinces; for care was taken to inform them, that Great-Britain conſidered it as her indiſpenſable right to bind her colonies in all caſes whatſoever.

This frivolous declaration, which proved nothing but our vanity and impotence, inſtead of regaining us the confidence and affection of America, ſuggeſted to her the neceſſity of providing againſt any future attacks, and taught her to watch, and examine with the moſt ſcrupulous attention, every act of the Britiſh ſenate which bore the moſt diſtant affinity to her liberties and commerce; Conſcious of her own power, which ſhe had recently felt and exerted, ſhe held a language and obſerved a conduct much leſs reſpectable than what ſhe had hitherto done; yet notwithſtanding the inſolence of the one, and the puſillanimity of the other, the reſpective commercial intereſts of both countries preſerved a tolerable harmony between them, till the folly or wickedneſs of the preſent miniſters revived the right of taxation, at the diſtance of eight years after it had been acknowledged and abandoned as impracticable, and after the induſtry and policy of the whole

whole continent had been conſtantly employed to obtain the means of repelling by force any attempt that might again be made on their property.

Surely if it was impracticable to enforce obedience to an act of parliament in the year 1765, it was much more ſo in the year 1773. Eight years population, agreeable to the loweſt calculations, would have encreaſed the number of inhabitants at leaſt one-third, while the perpetual and numerous emigrations of entire families from Germany, Scotland, Ireland, and England, muſt have afforded America an addition of ſtrength, which rendered her ſtill more capable of contending againſt the power of this country.

This truth is ſo obvious, that it certainly would have been attended to, if the Dæmon of Deſpotiſm had not ſuggeſted the neceſſity of "*unconditional ſubmiſſion*," nor has the glorious and ſucceſsful reſiſtance of THREE MILLION OF FREEMEN been able to refute a ſentiment which tyranny at firſt inſpired, and which diſappointed malice alone preſerves.

It is not denied that the major part of the people of this country are friendly to America;* They are ſenſible that the cauſe of America is the cauſe of liberty and the conſtitution, and that if ſhe had been reduced to "*unconditional ſubmiſſion*" both countries would have been ENSLAVED; Is it not then extraordinary, That the Whigs in England ſhould remain INACTIVE, in times like the preſent, ſo hoſtile to public liberty, and not ſecond the generous efforts of their trans-atlantic Brethren, eſpecially when the conduct of Government ſeems more calculated to PROVOKE their reſentment than to CONCILIATE their affections?

Taxation, after having been given up in 1765, was again revived in 1773, when this ſpawn of giant Power and coward Fraud—This abortion of Tyranny was ſent over to America, ſupported by ſupremacy of Parliament on one ſide, and unconditional ſubmiſſion on the other, but the alarm which had been given at the former period, had put her on her guard, and it was not by negotiations, remonſtrances, and petitions that ſhe intended, or indeed could hope to reſiſt a ſecond attempt:

* The ſentiments of the people are not to be collected from the ſentiments of a ſervile and corrupt majority in parliament, nor are we not to be told at this time how majorities in the ſenate are procured and retained. The general diſtreſs, and the undiſguiſed, unreſerved murmurs of a whole nation, extending from the Palace to the Cottage, give the lie direct to the aſſertions of miniſters and their aſſociates.

it muſt be decided by force of arms; and an experiment of the national ſtrength, on ſuch an occaſion, and for no object of permanent, or even of momentary utility, reflected very little credit either on the capacity or humanity of the miniſtry. Coercion, however, was reſolved upon at all events, and acts upon acts were paſſed by parliament, to intimidate men who no longer acknowledged its authority, and who had appealed to Heaven and the ſword in defence of that freedom which they conſidered as their birth-right. In the firſt inſtance, it was called the war of Miniſters, it afterwards became the war of parliament, and again reverting to the miniſtry, who diſclaimed it, it is now become a war of PREROGATIVE.

The moſt zealous in recommending hoſtilities, for the purpoſe of plundering and dragooning an unarmed peaſantry, were the great law officers of the crown—thoſe LEGAL counſellors, who held that law is liberty, and that America had rejected liberty by diſputing law—Such was the curious and deciſive logic of Lord Mansfield, that great LAW GENERAL, who declared that the Americans had paſſed the Rubicon, and if we did not cut their throats they would cut ours. It is to the iniquity and injuſtice of theſe ſanguinary councils that we owe the diſmemberment of the Britiſh empire, and the calamities of a foreign as well as of a civil war. To the cruelty and injuſtice of drawing the ſword were added inſult and calumny. Both houſes of legiſlature were prodigal in their abuſe of the Americans, whom they ſtigmatized as cowards and as blockheads.* Allowing the ſtigma to be juſt, it is a reflection on the

* Lord Sandwich, in one houſe, and General Grant, in the other, were the firſt to brand the Americans as cowards and as blockheads. The former ſummoned the ghoſt of Sir Peter Warren from its peaceful manſion, in ſupport of his illiberal reproach; while the latter declared, that, with five hundred men, he would march from one extreme of the continent to the other.

Theſe were the opinions of men high in the royal confidence of their ſovereign; opinions abhorrent to reaſon and philoſophy, but which were received with avidity, becauſe they were conſonant with the ſanguinary and obdurate temper of THAT *man*, who ſeems deſirous of exchanging the ancient and venerable motto of *Dieu et mon droit*, for the more claſſical and pleaſing one of *ſic volo ſic jubeo*. Had theſe gentlemen conſulted Horace, they would have learnt, that the lion could not beget the lamb, nor the bird of Jove the timid dove.——

Fortes creantur fortibus, et bonis
Eſt in juvencis, eſt in equis patrum
Virtus; nec imbellum feroces
Progenerant aquilæ columbam.

wiſdom

wiſdom and *magnanimity* of this country to have ſued to thoſe very COWARDS and BLOCKHEADS for a peace, after a conteſt of four years, in which the ſtrength of this country had been in vain exerted to ſubjugate them. The American miniſter† had forgot, or, at leaſt, he affected to forget, the haughty inſolence with which he had DAR'D to boaſt, in the face of parliament and of the world, that he would have America proſtrate at his feet, and would hear of nothing but UNCONDITIONAL SUBMISSION.

The commons were deceived into an expectation of deriving a revenue from the colonies. This was the promiſe of the miniſtry, and, on the faith of that promiſe, they were ſupported by ſome, while others, who had enliſted into their ſervice, were compelled to give their countenance, or loſe what they deemed of more conſequence than a faithful diſcharge of their duty to their country and their conſtituents.—Their places or their penſions.

At the diſtance of two years, the American miniſter came forward, and confeſſed that a revenue from America was viſionary, and even if it was not, that it would never be an object worth attending to, "*What then do we contend for?*" ſays parliament. For your ſupremacy, it was ſaid---"*Aye, the ſupremacy of parliament?*"—Moſt certainly, it was replied; and you muſt not relinquiſh it.—"*To be ſure not,*" ſaid the commons; "*We will therefore give you money and men, and do you preſerve to us our ſupremacy.*"—Money and men were accordingly voted and ſent to America with all poſſible expedition; but it was afterwards diſcovered that a union of any kind with America, was of more importance than this ſupremacy, and it was accordingly given up with as little ceremony as the proſpect of a revenue had been.

Commiſſioners * were then appointed and diſpatched; but it was found as difficult to accompliſh this deſirable union, as it had been to derive a revenue,

† Lord George Germaine.

* Another inſtance of the wiſdom of adminiſtration appears in their choice of commiſſioners to reſtore peace and unanimity to a diſtracted and divided empire.

Without offending either of the gentlemen appointed to this important office, we may venture to declare that neither of them poſſeſſed that degree of weight and conſequence in the ſtate equal to the ſolemnity and dignity of the characters with which they were inveſted. Lord Carliſle was only known to us as an amiable young nobleman of engaging

 manners

revenue, or to maintain the ſupremacy of parliament.—" *What now remains to be done?*" exclaims the houſe of commons?—Oh! ſays miniſtry, we will now ſhew them no mercy: they have forfeited every pretenſion to our lenity; a different mode of war ſhall be immediately adopted; we have reſources in abundance, if you will only be unanimous, and not parſimonious, and America ſhall yet ſubmit to *unconditional ſubmiſſion*. Here

manners in private life, who had contrived to injure his patrimony, by an imprudent, tho' faſhionable, attention to the pleaſures and diſſipations of the age. He had as yet taken no active or conſpicuous part in parliament, nor diſcovered either a diſpoſition for buſineſs, or abilities for negociation. He had, indeed, married a daughter of a peer, who, beſides being preſident of the council, was at the head of a powerful faction: but this could only promote his appointment to an office; it could not poſſibly qualify him for the duties of it. Mr. Johnſtone was as little likely to impreſs the world with any favourable ſentiments of himſelf, as his noble colleague; he had not even the advantage of a right honourable birth to boaſt of; and it was not very probable that any confidence would be placed in a man who had ſo recently deſerted his party and accepted of an office, the honour and emoluments of which were more immediately, perhaps, the objects of his attention, than a wiſh to re-unite the two counties. As to Mr. Eden, he had combated thoſe evils with ſucceſs to which the youngeſt ſons of gentlemen of ſmall eſtates are expoſed, and triumphed over every diſadvantage ariſing from indifferent circumſtances, by the mere ſtrength of talents, aided by great application and a ſerious turn for buſineſs. From a ſtudent in the Temple, where he had devoted himſelf to the law for his ſubſiſtence, he was called into the more public walk of politics, and thought himſelf amply provided for, when he was appointed an under ſecretary to the late Lord Suffolk, who brought him into parliament: he afterwards married a daughter of the late Sir Gilbert Elliot, and that compleated his good fortune; but his merit and rapid riſe in life did not, and indeed could not give him that conſequence which the novelty and object of the commiſſion required.

On ſo important an occaſion, could not the miniſtry diſcover, in the two houſes of parliament, three men, from whoſe public characters there was reaſon to expect they would have been honoured with a CONFERENCE, if not with the *confidence* of congreſs?—Did they not know that a Richmond, a Shelburne, or a Camden, whoſe public conduct *and talents* have commanded reſpect, would have been heard, and perhaps ſucceſsfully heard, in America; or was their ſovereign unwilling to confide in men, who, conſidering their obligations to their country as paramount to every other, had defended their own rights, with thoſe of their fellow-ſubjects? Were theſe the *ſecret* reaſons for which rank, dignity of character, integrity, and abilities were over-looked or diſregarded, and three individuals invited from obſcurity and ſent to the weſtern world; Or was it the marriage of two of them, and the apoſtacy of the third, that ſecured them a preference which has diſhonoured them, and loſt the nation for ever the final opportunity of an accommodation with America?

we

we find them, after having, like Roman gladiators, traverſed the circus, returning to the very point from whence they ſet out on their hoſtile career.—The conteſt now became more ſerious, and the event of it ſtill more uncertain, from the part which France avowed.

Parliament having abandoned all proſpect of deriving a revenue from America, and even the folly of contending for ſupremacy, the miniſtry were again aſked what was to be done, now that France had joined with America? "*How ſhall we be able to withſtand their united force, after finding ourſelves ſo inadequate to the taſk of ſubduing one of them?*—Nothing ſo eaſy, it was replied. Give us your confidence and your money, and we will conduct you through the tempeſt.---It was agreed; money and men were again voted with the moſt unbounded liberality, great naval and other military preparations were made, and a fleet of ſhips, half rotten and ill manned, were collected together from Plymouth, where they ought to have remained, from its vicinity to Breſt, and aſſembled at Portſmouth, that the ſovereign might be accommodated with one of the moſt magnificent ſights in the univerſe, as near the metropolis as poſſible. This fleet, which ought to have been ſent to ſea immediately, was detained at Portſmouth for a conſiderable time, and the fiſhery on the banks of Newfoundland, was deſtroyed by American privateers,* which even menaced and plundered the different harbours, while the force deſtined to protect them, remained inactive at Spithead with a large convoy of merchants' ſhips,† waiting the departure of Vice Admiral Montague, who had been kept from his ſtation, and the ſervice of his country, for the more *important* purpoſe of amuſing his Majeſty.

The grand fleet, however, was at laſt permitted to ſail in queſt of that of France, and, in order that the whole conduct of Miniſters ſhould be uniform and conſiſtent, the commander in chief had an *admiral*

* Nor has Newfoundland been better protected this year.

† By this wanton delay, ſeveral of the merchants were almoſt ruined, and loſt the advantage of an entire ſeaſon, by arriving too late for the fiſhery. Yet Lord Sandwich is continued in office, and appears to riſe in the royal eſtimation of his Sovereign in proportion as he becomes the object of popular hatred and contempt.

and

and a *captain** under him of different principles, and from whom neither harmony nor ſupport could be expected. What rendered this appointment yet more extraordinary, was their being members of that board from whence the commanding officer received his inſtructions, and which had perhaps been ſigned by them; and when the neceſſity of unanimity in all public undertakings, and eſpecially in military expeditions is conſidered, it will be difficult to excuſe the firſt Lord of the Admiralty, for ſending men of oppoſite principles to ſea together, on a ſervice of ſuch conſequence to the ſtate.†

* Who not content with a ſeat in parliament, and at the admiralty, inſiſted on keeping the command of his ſhip in which he was indulged; and this indulgence was the more criminal, as ſeveral veteran officers, of experienced bravery and unqueſtionable merit, had reſigned the ſweets of domeſtic ſociety, and reſorting to the metropolis with an offer of their ſervices, were loitering about the admiralty, at a great expence, in expectation of employment, while he continued in commiſſion, and was even ſent to ſea, under the command of Mr. Keppel, with whoſe orders he was moſt probably acquainted. The impropriety, to ſay nothing of the indelicacy, of ſending out two men of ſubordinate rank under a commander in chief, of whoſe conduct in every particular they were *enabled*, and probably DIRECTED, to judge, is of itſelf ſufficiently reprehenſible; but when we recollect the ſubſequent conduct of thoſe very officers, and particularly that of the *baronet*, * it is no unreaſonable conjecture to ſuppoſe, that they both had appointments on that occaſion very different, and not quite ſo honourable, as thoſe which they oſtenſibly held, and this conjecture derive no inconſiderable ſupport from the novelty of the admiralty-board ſending two of its members to ſea, and one of them very diſtant in rank from the commander in chief, and under the particular command of his colleague in office. It is not uſual, nor is it prudent, to impart the orders to any one in the fleet under which the commander in chief acts, for reaſons too obvious to require repetition; and this maxim was invariably obſerved in the late war, when all our military operations were founded in wiſdom, and attended with ſucceſs: but the purpoſes for which this rule has been recently violated need no explanation; Mr. Keppel is not the only officer whom the preſent miniſters have inſulted and endeavoured to diſgrace, nor are Sir Hugh Palliſer and his colleague, the only inſtruments whom they have employed to criminate and defame thoſe whom they could not deceive or corrupt.

† By the repeated additions, which have been recently made to the liſt of admirals, it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that theſe promotions were occaſioned by the old officers being unfit for ſervice; yet one of the oldeſt, and moſt infirm, has been ſelected for the command of that fleet, on which the fate of this country has depended.

* It was lately intended to give a command to Sir Hugh Palliſer, notwithſtanding he is recorded for having preferred a FALSE and MALICIOUS charge againſt his ſuperior officer; but the unanimous determination of every independant commander in the navy to reſign the very moment that his flag ſhould be hoiſted, deter'd the preſident of the marine department from giving another opportunity to this man, to diſgrace his country; and this intimatiod was given to his Lordſhip by an officer of high rank and acknowledg'd bravery, when our fleet ſought refuge from that of France, in Portſmouth.

Had

Sir Hugh Palliſer envious of Mr. Keppel, to whom he was ſubordinate, denied him the aſſiſtance which was required in a critical moment, and deprived this country, perhaps, of the only opportunity ſhe may ever have of deſtroying, or at leaſt, of checking the naval power of France.* After this unhappy event, the fleet returned, not indeed diſgraced, as has been ſaid, but very far from being victorious, and ſoon after the commiſſioners arrived from New-York, without being able to obtain even the honour of a conference, and one of them marked with the odium and cenſure of Congreſs. Their arrival was immediately followed by that of an expreſs of Dominica being taken by the French, and the miniſtry were again queſtioned on the danger of this country, from the alliance which had taken place between France and America, and whether they thought it poſſible to reduce the latter? Nothing ſo eaſy, they replied, we have only to beat the former, and we ſhall yet triumph in America. "*Indeed!*" No doubt of it, ——It is yet in our power to puniſh the perfidy of the one, and the ingratitude of the other. But you muſt give us a vote of credit for another million, and continue your confidence to us——"*Moſt chearfully*," it was replied; *but ſuppoſe that Spain ſhould join, how ſhall we be able to contend againſt the triple league?*" Impoſſible, ſays his Lordſhip—— Spain has colonies of her own to preſerve, ſuch an example would be fatal to her authority in Mexico and Peru; beſides, we have aſſurances to the contrary, and as Spain is diſtinguiſhed and adored for her attention to the faith of treaties, it would be indecent and ungenerous to ſuſpect her honor;† aſſiſt us only in proportion to the emergency of the occaſion, and we

* That this muſt have been the motive of Sir Hugh Palliſer is evident from the ſubſequent conduct of that gentleman, in deliberately, and at the diſtance of five months, exhibiting five different charges againſt Mr. Keppel, all of which were aimed at his life and character, and which the accuſer muſt have been conſcious at the time were FALSE and MALICIOUS. The iniquity of ſuch a proceeding is without excuſe, and as to his confederates of inferior rank, they are beneath our notice: they have been rewarded with promotion, and that perhaps was more the object of their wiſhes, and the cauſe of their perjuries, than a deſire that an innocent and brave officer ſhould be diſgraced, and ſuffer an ignominious death.

† *Vide* Lord Stormont's ſpeech in a debate previous to the delivery of the Spaniſh manifeſto, in which his lordſhip was laviſh of his encomiums on *caſtilian honour*, and declared

we ſhall defeat the deſigns of the Bourbon family, recover America, and eſtabliſh the authority of the mother country, over her undutiful and rebellious colonies. Theſe promiſes were vaſtly flattering and very pretty, and as a *complaiſant* ſenate could not be rude enough to queſtion the veracity of miniſtry, a full aſſurance of ſupport was again promiſed to his Lordſhip. It however unfortunately happened, that Spain forgot ſhe had the dependency of her colonies to preſerve; ſhe even violated her Caſtilian honour, and what was infinitely worſe in the opinion of parliament, ſhe even told *fibs* of the miniſtry, in excuſe for her taking part with France againſt us.

The conſtancy of their friends was, however, equal to the provoking conduct of their enemies; and the former again enquired, with their uſual good humour, what was to be done now, that Spain had reſolved to be hoſtile?—Oh, ſaid miniſtry, it is no more than what we expected.† The event has at laſt happened, which we long dreaded—You muſt give us a vote of credit for another million, in addition to the ſupplies which you have already granted——double the militia, and invite Prince Ferdinand ‡ over to command your army, we ſhall then be in a condition to oppoſe the invaſion, which our enemies have premeditated.

clared *there was not the moſt diſtant proſpect of a Spaniſh war.* This Peer has been made Secretary of State, not indeed with the hearty concurrence of his noble Relation, the Chief Juſtice, who has declared that his Lordſhip muſt expect nothing more of him than his beſt wiſhes, as he is now too old to take an active part even in times leſs troubleſome than the preſent.

† It requires no inconſiderable degree of ingenuity to reconcile this confeſſion with the poſitive aſſurance of Spain's pacific diſpoſition, which the miniſtry and their aſſociates peremptorily aſſerted in both houſes of parliament, the very week preceding the delivery of the Spaniſh manifeſto.

‡ The intention of inviting a foreign officer to command our army correſponds exactly with what a late member of the houſe of commons, and then at the head of the war-office, aſſerted, in his ſeat, "*That we had not an officer fit to be commander in chief*;" and if he drew his concluſion from a ſuppoſition that Lord Amherſt was the MOST capable of all our General officers for ſo important a ſtation, he certainly was not miſtaken.

At

At the mention of invaſion, a panic, for the firſt time, ſeized the Britiſh ſenate, and an unanimous ſupport was inſtantly given to thoſe men, who had progreſſively laughed at and inſulted the whole nation, and who deſerved impeachment inſtead of the confidence of parliament. We are now attacked by France and Spain, deſerted by Portugal, menaced by Holland, diſpoſſeſſed of the continent of America, and not only deprived of the affections of three millions of people, and of their commerce, but compelled to contend againſt their power, † at home as well as diſtance of three thouſand miles, without an ally, and even without reſources, or at leaſt, reſources equal to the peculiar danger and difficulties, with which we are ſurrounded. Such is the preciſe ſituation of this country at this moment; and when we compare it with the brilliant and unexampled period of 1762, that glorious æra, in which the diſtant nations of the earth were ſpectators of our victories, and beheld the united power of the Bourbon family humbled and defeated in every part of the habitable globe, what man, who is awake to a ſenſe of honour or of ſhame, but muſt execrate the conduct of thoſe miniſters, who have reduced us to ſo mortifying and to ſo impotent a condition? Let the compariſon be fairly made between the years 1762, and 1779, by the moſt temperate and diſpaſſionate among us, and it will then be acknowledged, that the conduct of adminiſtration has been equally criminal and weak. Facts ſpeak for themſelves, and when truths ſo notorious as theſe, preſent themſelves to our view, it is impudence and profligacy in the extreme to deny them.

The political maxim of *divide et impera*, had already been avowed in the cabinet and ſenate, and it had alſo been diſcovered, that to *corrupt* as well as to *divide*, was an expedient equally uſeful in ſecuring a majority in the intereſts of the crown.*

That

† Againſt their naval power, which annoys our trade and even captures our ſhips of war in ſight of our very harbors.

* Whenever this maxim is adopted, it muſt be for the obtaining of more power than what the conſtitution admits of. To create parties, in the firſt inſtance, and then to incenſe them againſt each other, can only be for the purpoſe of bribing the paſſions on one ſide, and afterwards uſurping upon both. "But the prince who purſues this "method riſques a power he hath for a power he does not want: and he is the more inex-"cuſable under ſuch a conſtitution as ours; becauſe, if he could not gain eſteem by *great*, "he might gain *affection* by his *good*, qualities: for what can he deſire more than to be "placed at the head of an united people, among whom he may have as many friends as

"he

That ſyſtem of government which has reduced us to this mortifying condition might poſſibly at firſt have proceeded from weakneſs and incapacity in thoſe, who, unable to govern agreeable to the more rational and popular principles of the conſtitution, were compelled to apply the riches of the nation, to purchaſe that ſupport, which wiſdom and inflexible honeſty, acting on the noble principles of public juſtice and public virtue, would have commanded even from a venal ſenate; but this origin of a ruinous and diſhonourable ſyſtem, is the leſs likely, from the numerous miniſters of late years having invariably adopted it. What might have been folly and ignorance in *ſome*, muſt have been poſitive treachery, and downright profligacy, in *others*, and from hence, it is reaſonable to infer, that a deſign had been concerted, towards the concluſion of the laſt reign, or very early after the commencement of the preſent, to truſt leſs to the popularity and equity of public meaſures for ſupport, than to the more powerful and captivating influence of the treaſury.

The avaricious were bribed with penſions, the vain were gratified with titles, and the ambitious were rewarded with power, in return for the concurrence and ſupport which they gave to government.* Thus

" he pleaſes, and can have no enemies, unleſs he makes them, by ſuppoſing them ſuch, " and treating them accordingly?—If he expects that all his people ſhall think like him " and his council, about every occurrence, about every meaſure he takes and every man he " employs, ſuch an expectation will be founded in folly, and have MISCHIEF for its object, " ſince this is too much to aſk even of ſlaves. Shall he proſcribe every man, as an enemy " to his government, who diſlikes the adminiſtration of it?—Proſcriptions are abomi- " nable and inhuman, when they are backed by a fulneſs of arbitrary power; but to hang " up the tables of proſcription, without the power of ſending centurions to cut off " every head that wears a face diſliked at court, would be madneſs in the prince, and cannot " ſuit with his intereſt, whatever it may do with his paſſions."

* The difficulty of obtaining full and ample proofs of facts which are become moral certainties have authoriſed ſome to deny them, and others to diſbelieve, or rather to affect to diſbelieve them; but what other excuſe can poſſibly be offered for the recent and pitiful conduct of the Duke of Northumberland, in SUPPLICATING of the miniſtry (with a fortune of 50,000l. per annum in his poſſeſſion) the office of maſter of the horſe to the King, but his avarice or his vanity?

Governments at home and in the colonies have been created, and offices invented, to provide for thoſe who wiſhed to imitate the great object of their adoration, by tyrannizing in a leſſer degree, while a voluminous peerage, and a herd of penſioners, the worthleſs droaes of our hive, prove to a demonſtration that the public money, and titles, which ought ever to be the rewards of virtue and of merit, have been diſtributed with the wanton and ſcandalous profuſion of a ſpendthrift, regardleſs of his future fame and welfare.

ſtrengthened

ſtrengthened and ſupported by all the little, as well as by all the great arts of ſtate, the miniſter might well think himſelf fortified againſt an impotent oppoſition, and ſufficiently authoriſed to depend on a ſervile majority for an approbation to all his meaſures; but though we had become corrupt at home, and inſenſible to the preſervation, if not to the very exiſtence of our free government, yet the people of America were more attentive to their intereſts, and ſtanding with a glorious fortitude on the adamantine pillars of civil and religious liberty, aſſerted, in the very face of power, that a Britiſh ſubject could neither be taxed, nor compelled to obey laws to which he had not previouſly given his conſent. The miniſter conſequently met with reſiſtance, when he paſſed the boundaries of the conſtitution, to pillage the remote, and, as he thought, *defenceleſs* colonies; but a negative was ſounded from the diſtant ſhores of America, as from the voice of Jove; nor has the thunder of the Britiſh arms been able to cancel the irrevocable *fiat* of truth and juſtice.

America, in the firſt inſtance, exacted nothing more from us than a decent reverence to her chartered and natural rights, and a very moderate attention to them, on our part, would have diverted, and perhaps have prevented, in future, the execution of the deſign ſhe had formed, to ſhake off her dependence, whenever we furniſhed her with an opportunity and excuſe, by drawing the ſword.* It was the immediate duty, and ought to have been the particular care of adminiſtration, not to have made any claim, that was not explicit, and even acknowledged by the colonies; † they are conſequently unpardonable, in reviving an equivocal claim, which had already been abandoned as impracticable and inexpedient, and declared to have been unconſtitutional.

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* "Subjects ſeldom venture upon reſiſtance, which is their laſt remedy, but in caſes of "extreme neceſſity; and the people, unleſs their jealouſy be raiſed by repeated injuries, "are always ready to view the actions of their ſovereign with an *indulgent* eye."——— *Robertſon's Hiſtory of Scotland, vol. I. pages* 135 *and* 271.

† At the moment that perfidious Gaul, the common enemy of both nations, declared herſelf the ally of the *one*, intent only on the deſtruction of the *other*, Great-Britain, humbled and abaſhed, preſented herſelf at the foot of America, and, acknowledging her offences, condeſcended to implore her friendſhip and forgiveneſs. It was expected that America would have raiſed her proſtrate parent from the earth, and, by rejecting an alliance with France, who had an addition of power and an encreaſe of commerce more at heart

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The requiſitions from the firſt Congreſs were reſpectful, legal, and equitable; but unhappily the bayonet was more congenial with that *revengeful* and *vindictive* ſpirit, which had ſo often appeared on even the moſt frivolous occaſions, and from the worſt of motives. It was therefore preferred, and fleets and armies were tranſported to the other ſide of the Atlantic, to recover by violence, what had been loſt by folly and oppreſſion.

Great induſtry was employed to obtain the concurrence of the trading part of the nation, to whom it was held out, that unleſs America was reduced to *conditional ſubmiſſion*, the whole of her commerce would be loſt to this country: by this artful appeal to their paſſions, the merchants were betrayed into an approbation of coercion, and the noble and generous flame of liberty, which had illumined this happy iſland for a ſerious of ages, was in one moment extinguiſhed by a ſelfiſh regard to perſonal intereſt.

Addreſſes equally fulſome and violent were preſented to the throne, and received with that unmeaning but ready ſmile,* which is beſtowed upon all occaſions and to all perſons without judgment or reſerve who form the circle at St. James's.

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than a ſincere reverence for the rights of mankind, have given an unexampled inſtance of magnanimity and patriotiſm to an admiring world: but it was aſſerted, that ſhe could no longer confide in a prince and his adminiſtration, who had, by a ſeries of *legalized tyranny*, ſhewn an inveterate enmity to the conſtitutional rights of both countries, and, under the full impreſſion of this melancholy idea; ſhe was compelled to look forward to independence. Such was the language and excuſe of America, and, intoxicated by the abject humility of one ſuitor, and the bewitching flattery of the other, ſhe diſdained even a conference with the commiſſioners who went out with an offer of terms more ample and liberal than ſhe had even requeſted.

* Liverpoole and Poole were foremoſt in expreſſing their attachment to the throne, not from motives of loyalty to their ſovereign, or affection for the conſtitution; but from ſordid views of intereſt. Poole, in particular, was anxious to have the Americans excluded the Newfoundland fiſhery, whom ſhe conſidered as her rivals in a trade which ſhe wiſhed to monopolize, and who were already in poſſeſſion of the Weſt-India market. A Quaker, named Liſter, and an admiral, who has ſince rendered himſelf the object of univerſal deteſtation, notwithſtanding his right honourable confederate has had the audacity to pronounce his eulogium in the houſe of lords, were called upon by miniſtry to aſſert falſhoods at the bar of both houſes of parliament, on which the *ſtarvation* bill, as it is emphatically called, was framed.

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The partial and mercenary voice of merchants and manufacturers, anxious to exclude America from all ſhare of their commerce, was alone heard, and prevailed over the dictates of ſound policy, as it has ſince done with reſpect to Ireland.* Contracts and offices of emoluments, which the exigencies of the times had rendered unavoidable, furniſhed and provided for ſome, while others were reduced to poverty and ruin. The gazettes, for a conſiderable period, contained little elſe than an account of bankruptcies at home, † and loſſes and diſgraceful defeats abroad; yet miniſters enabled by the pernicious influence, which their ſituation gives them, have perſevered in this impolitic war, and involved us in ſuch a variety of difficulties, that it is at laſt, become neceſſary to continue it.

The addreſs which was preſented at St. James's as from the mayor and corporation of the town of Poole, in 1775, contained the names of entire ſtrangers, who, happening to ſtop at the public inns, were requeſted to ſign it; but this was not the only inſtance in which the ſovereign had been inſulted with a lie. Other arts, equally deſpicable and mean, were alſo employed in order to obtain an appearance of unanimity throughout the country, and the real and permanent intereſts of the kingdom were ſacrificed to the unprovoked reſentment of the miniſtry, and the contemptible jealouſy of mercenary traders.——

* There never was an inſtance of a nation, under a free government, more oppreſſed, nor a people whoſe complaints deſerve more attention and relief, than the Iriſh. The affluent proprietors of great eſtates in that neglected iſland, ſeldom reſiding there, ſpend their fortunes chiefly in England, or on the continent. The taxes, which are raiſed in it under the pretence of defraying the exigencies of the ſtate, are diſtributed, to the amount of near a million ſterling, in penſions on the profligate and indigent, who are alſo above living in the country which maintains them. Her trade is reſtricted and oppreſſed by impolitic acts of parliament, which prove nothing but our power and injuſtice; and when ſhe ſubmiſſively deſcribed her diſtreſſed ſituation, and implored our compaſſion; when parliament had even taken her grievances into conſideration with an intention to relieve her, a mercenary, ignorant herd of weavers, from a ſingle town, had the preſumption to oppoſe, and the diſhoneſt ſatisfaction to defeat, the benevolent deſigns of an abject ſenate, devoted to the intereſt of a miniſtry, who preferred the preſervation of two votes from Mancheſter, and as many from Lancaſhire, to the loyal affections and happineſs of an entire nation, roufed however, by repeated injuries and inſults, to a ſenſe of her wrongs, Ireland has at laſt aſſerted her claim to a free trade; the little that ſhe ſolicited laſt year as a *favor*, was refuſed to her, and ſhe now demands emancipation from ſlavery as a matter of RIGHT. Will miniſters reject her again? They dare not, ſhe has the *power* and ſhe has the *virtue*, which we want, to do herſelf juſtice. The ſpirit of liberty is gone forth in that country, and will triumph over all oppoſition.

† The number of bankrupts laſt year amounted to SEVEN HUNDRED, which are FOUR HUNDRED more than were ever known in any fomer year; an alarming fact and which can be proved, by a reference to the gazette.

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An appeal to the indiſputable evidence of facts, may, perhaps awaken us to a ſenſe of our ſituation, and provoke an exertion of national ſpirit and reſentment, to repel the common foe, in the firſt inſtance, and afterwards to demand ample vengeance on the authors of our calamities. Let us then behold a detail of melancholy facts, of facts ſo notorious, that *whoever runs may read.*

A mutilated empire engaged in a war, the event of which is as uncertain as is the period of its concluſion, without an ally on whom ſhe can depend, in the moment of danger and neceſſity, for aſſiſtance. The moſt valuable part of her commerce gone for ever into a different channel, and the other part ſubject to ſuch riſque, as to check the adventurous ſpirit of trade; while her people are oppreſſed by taxes and by acts of parliament,* which, in their conſequences, tend to the total ſubverſion of their rights

* The liberty of the ſubject, which had hitherto been preſerved with ſo much jealouſy and caution, and for which our anceſtors were ſo aſſiduous to provide, is now no longer regarded as ſacred by parliament, nor as ineſtimable by the people. Preſſing, which had always been declared illegal, and never had recourſe to, but in caſes of extreme emergency, is now authoriſed by law, and the officers employed on that obnoxious and diſgraceful ſervice, as well as the deſpicable and indigent herd of Middleſex juſtices, and their lawleſs banditti, find impunity for the moſt wanton barbarity and injuſtice, in an act which exempts them from legal puniſhment.

" *And be it further enacted, that no perſon or perſons ſhall be ſued or moleſted for taking and* " *impreſſing, or cauſing to be taken and impreſſed, within the time aforeſaid, any perſon or perſons* " *for his Majeſty's ſervice at ſea.*

The oppreſſed citizen has no longer a remedy, in the juſtice and laws of his country, againſt brutal violence and arbitrary power, but muſt confide leſs in that great bulwark of liberty, Magna Charta, than in the humanity or fears of theſe mercenary delegates of deſpotiſm. No miniſtry but the preſent, and not even theſe, in any *other reign*, would have dared to propoſe, or rather to *demand*, of parliament, ſo direct a repeal of the conſtitution. Lord Sandwich had the inſolence to declare, in the houſe of peers, that he would never ſet his foot in it again, if he was not ſupported in the impreſſed bill, and it is ſincerely to be lamented that their lordſhips did not take him at his word. This language alone deſerved commitment, if not impeachment; but, fortified as miniſters are, with placemen and penſioners, they proceed in their dangerous career, regardleſs of future conſequences, as if they were reſolved to try the very extent of parliamentary profligacy, and proceed to the very ſummit of political wickedneſs.

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and liberties, and to prepare them for that ſlavery, which, by their abject ſubmiſſion to a ſhameleſs cabal, they ſeem to invite and deſerve.†

Such is the preciſe and dreadful condition, to which this country is reduced, by a progreſſive chain of events, which have regularly appriſed us of what has at laſt happened; and as we have not the virtue to bring the perpetrators of our miſery and diſgrace to condign and exemplary puniſhment, it muſt be left to the juſtice of poſterity, to mark with infamy and deteſtation, the memories of thoſe who have brought the character of their ſovereign into diſrepute, his crown into abſolute danger, and accelerated the rapid decline of the Britiſh Empire, by the complicated crimes of treachery, venailty, and corruption.

FROM the foregoing obſervations, it will appear, that the conduct of the preſent reign has been uniformly directed to obtain an unconſtitutional influence over the ariſtocratic and repreſentative parts of the nation, and that where corruption has failed to promote this end, the arm of prerogative has been oppoſed to the ſhield of the people, and a variety of little arts adopted to COMPEL, as well as to SEDUCE them into an approbation of the meaſures of the crown.

A regular ſeries of events have confirmed this alarming truth beyond the poſſibility of contradiction.

Let us then take a view of the manners and principles of the times, as far at leaſt as they relate to us, and examine whether they have not con-

† From the uniform conduct of the preſent reign, there does not exiſt a doubt, that if America had been reduced to unconditional ſumiſſion, the liberties of both nations would have been endangered, and when we conſider the INIQUITY of proſecuting with relentleſs fury the war with America, after it has been univerſally allowed to be *impoſſible* to recover her. What other inference can be drawn, but that the object of the conteſt is now to reduce the ſpirit of this country, that the people exhauſted and depreſſed may become eaſy victims to deſpotiſm. This is no ſpeculative opinion ariſing from a diſtempered imagination, but a logical deduction from a ſeries of eſtabliſhed facts and authenticated events;

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tributed to the encreaſe of that dangerous influence which threatens ſo much miſchief to our liberties, and already preſages the final eſtabliſhment of deſpotiſm on the ruins of the conſtitution. * If it ſhould appear in the courſe of this enquiry, that the impotent condition to which we are reduced ſhould be aſcribed in a great meaſure to a want of probity and of public virtue in ourſelves, and that the love of liberty has been ſuperceded by a rage for diſſipation and a taſte for pleaſures at once extravagant and effeminate;

If it ſhould appear that we have been acceſſary to our misfortunes by having become the accomplices of thoſe miniſters, who have abuſed their truſt, and converted three million of faithful ſubjects into as many enemies; the enormity of our guilt may poſſibly awaken us to a ſenſe of our danger, and ſtimulate us to recover our antient character by reſtoring the conſtitution to its primitive purity, or at leaſt, by ſecuring it againſt any future attacks of the crown.

The writer, however, who undertakes to expoſe the vices and follies of his own times, muſt expect to create an hoſt of enemies;

He will give offence to the thoughtleſs and diſſipated, as well as to the profligate; they will be equally diſpleaſed at the bold but honeſt freedoms of truth, and in proportion as conviction forces itſelf on their minds they will be provoked to deny his aſſertions, but it is not the favor of either that he is to ſeek. His object is to give a faithful picture of the times, in the execution of which he muſt be alike indifferent to the praiſe or cenſure of individuals.

The love of liberty which has diſtinguiſhed this country for ſo many centuries paſt, and which even formed a part of the character of our women † ſo late as the reign of the firſt George, ſeems to have ſuffered a

* "We all wiſh to continue free; tho' we have not the virtue to ſecure our freedom. The ſpirit of liberty is now ſtruggling with the *manners* and *principles*, as formerly it ſtruggled with the tyrants of the time. But the danger is now greater, becauſe the *enemy* is WITHIN; working ſecretly and ſecurely, and deſtroying all thoſe INTERNAL POWERS, from which alone an effectual oppoſition can ariſe. BROWNE'S ESTIMATE, ſect. 2d. page 18.

† Vide Spectator, Vol. 2. No. 81.

conſiderable

conſiderable diminution. It no longer prevails in our conduct, and but faintly in our writings and converſation. The diſtinctions of high church and low church are no longer heard, whig and tory may alſo be ſaid to be extinct or to exiſt only to anſwer the purpoſes of faction. Court and country intereſt are united, not that they are become one and the ſame thing, but that the love of country is loſt in the love of ſelf, and the obſcure repreſentatives of the diſtant counties are converted into men of ton, and, feeling a paſſion for excelling a well-bred gentleman uſher in manners and addreſs, are ſeduced from the tranquil enjoyments of ruſtic life, and become impatient for the more refined and voluptuous pleaſures of the metropolis.

This forms one part of our national character, but has the change been the effect of laudable improvement? certainly not, for if it had, the ſame regard would have been preſerved for the conſtitution, and the intereſts of the people would have been attended to, in preference to thoſe of the crown. We muſt therefore, enquire farther, for the cauſe of this extraordinary revolution, in the manners and principles of our country gentlemen. The diſſipations common to great towns, firſt entice, and then convert. The love of pleaſure, next to that of liberty, is the moſt prevalent in the human breaſt, and men are apt to give a free and unbounded ſcope to the one, in proportion, as they loſe ſight of the other. Country gentlemen, on their annual attendance in Parliament, having been invited to partake of the amuſements of the capitol, have imbibed a taſte for them, but as the force of habit is not eaſily deſtroyed, they have forgot the luxuries of a town life on their return to their venerable manſions, and found equal, if not ſuperior, pleaſure in the rural and more innocent diverſions of the field. While their antient prejudices remained, there was little probability, of their being ſeduced from their duty, but the moment they became effaced, every moral and political obligation was in danger of being ſacrificed, to the love of pleaſure, and it was likely that in the purſuit of their novel amuſements, the means of attaining them would be more attended to, than the conſequences reſulting from them.

Formerly, the repreſentative was paid by his conſtituents, for his attendance in parliament, but the crown having diſcovered, that places of truſt, and emolument, and penſions, were of admirable utility in removing all ſcruples of conſcience; they were held out as rewards, for thoſe who choſe to

ſupport, and not to oppoſe it; a ſeat in parliament, was eagerly ſolicited, not indeed as an honorary appointment, but as a place of profit, and the repreſentative, no longer recompenſed from the ſcanty, and parſimonious purſe of his particular county or borough, was paid in proportion to his ſervices, from the collected wealth of the nation.

The introduction of this evil, was inſtantly followed by a multitude of others, tending to the ſame miſchievous conſequences, and calculated to obtain the ſame end. Country members now reſort in ſhoals, to the miniſter and anticipate application, while charmed with deriving ſuch pecuniary advantages from their votes, they are tempted to confide the management of their farms, to tenant and deputies, and reſide altogether near the court, which by its bounty, enables them to partake of thoſe pleaſures, which it encourages them to follow. The convenient and frugal lodgings, which hitherto ſatisfied them for the few months, which they reluctantly paſſed in London, can now no longer accommodate them. Sumptuous dinners, and expenſive entertainments, require large houſes, and magnificent furniture, with ſuitable equipages and attendants. The country now is ſeldom thought of but in the ſummer months, and that merely, becauſe it is the faſhion to deſert the metropolis from July till November; yet even this ſhort interval is conſidered as a period of miſerable exile, from the more lively and delicious joys of London. Hence then, we ſee the plain country ſquire, who formerly valued himſelf, on his ruſtic ſimplicity and honeſty, transformed into a fine gentleman. Deſerting county, turnpike and pariſh meetings, for thoſe of Newmarket *, ſtudying Hoyle on the Chances, and loſing his fortune among ſharpers of various denominations. Inſtead of examining the general principles of legiſlation, or attending to the particular intereſts of his conſtituents, we find him, in his ſober moments, deviſing ways and means to raiſe his rents, that he may the better purſue his pleaſures.

* The pleaſures of the turf have had no inconſiderable ſhare in relaxing the morals and principles of the people.—The meaneſt and baſeſt are here admitted to the converſe of men of faſhion and fortune; without ceremony;

No decorum is obſerved or required, but intimacies are eſtabliſhed between Peers and Pickpockets; and the Engliſh Nobleman deſcends from the eminence of rank and character, to the meanneſs and familiarity of laying betts with Grooms and Stable-boys, whom he even endeavours perhaps to over-reach!

It is therefore, not very probable, that the love of country will occupy any conſiderable place in his thoughts, and it is as little likely that he ſhould poſſeſs any regard for the rights of his fellow citizens, who has proved that he has none for his own. His ſtile of living, having encreaſed his expences beyond his ability to ſupport, his fortune becomes impaired, and he finally becomes dependent on the miniſter; but as the acceptance of a civil employment under the crown vacates his ſeat, the miniſter muſt be ſatisfied of his being *re-elected*, before he will enroll him in his corps of mercenaries.

The member then conſults a few of his conſtituents on whom he can rely, imparts to them the ſpontaneous offers which have been made to him, the acceptance of which, he modeſtly hints, would enable him to be of uſe to his friends, and artfully concludes, with aſſuring them of his impatience to have it in his power to teſtify his great gratitude to them, for the many, very many obligations which they have undeſervedly and repeatedly conferred upon him.

Application is alſo made to the wives of his conſtituents, to whom oblique promiſes are given to provide for their well-fed booby ſons in the army, navy, or public offices. An aſſurance of ſupport thus obtained, the Gazette, ſoon after announces his appointment to the world, and a waggon freighted with the hopeful progeny of his virtuous electors, arrives in town, and they claim the performance of his engagements.

Some of them are ſhipped off as cadets or writers to India, which they are told, is the direct road to riches and to fame; and in proof of thoſe aſſertions, the names of our Nabobs are recourſed to them, who embarked without having half the advantages which they poſſeſs. This is believed of courſe, and the country ſhopkeeper, pleaſed at having his ſon made a *gentleman*; is reſolved, at all events, to ſupport the intereſt of his benefactor in the borough; while madam, the mother, extols his power and generoſity, at all the tea-tables in the neighbourhood where ſhe can get admittance; Taking care to exhibit, her aukward and fantaſtic clown of a ſon, in his red coat and cockade, metamorphoſed from being a plough or an errand boy, into a ſoldier, with a ſword by his ſide, which he neither knows how to uſe nor to wear.

If the placeman, to whom, this cargo of young adventurers is conſigned, ſhould not be able to tranſport them to Bengal, or Madraſs; he provides for as many as he can in the ſervice of government, and the ſtate is deprived, from that moment, of ſo many citizens, who are alſo deprived of their freedom; for their maintenance proceeding from the crown, it cannot be expected that they will take a part againſt it.

Hence then, we muſt acknowledge, that the original purpoſes for which repreſentation was inſtituted, is perverted to feed the vanity and luxury of a prodigal ſpendthrift, but this is not all. The evil extends farther. It extends to the electors themſelves, and whenever the body of the people become corrupt, farewel to the liberties of this country, as well as to the freedom and independance of parliament.

The vices peculiar, and indeed inſeperable from a great town, have penetrated to the extremities of the kingdom, and infected all ranks of people. We have no ſuch character at preſent in exiſtence, as the plain country gentleman: The Spectator may be ſaid to have recorded the laſt, in the perſon of Sir Roger de Coverly, and our youths even of ſmall fortune, educated in the polite world, and accuſtomed from their infancy, to aſſociate with what is generally called good company, enter at once into life perfect courtiers.

This diſtinction of character, which was formerly preſerved, with ſo much jealouſy, preſerved alſo a diſtinction in morals. Diſſimulation was confined to the court, or at leaſt to the metropolis. It was held infamous to have recourſe to trick and deceit, in the diſtant and leſs corrupted parts of the Empire, but in proportion, as our manners have become refined, new doctrines have been broach'd, and the modern ſyſtem of politeneſs, admits it as one of its principal tenets, to cover the moſt dark and malignant deſigns, under the appearance of friendſhip and ſincerity.

It will be aſked perhaps, what has occaſioned this extraordinary change, expecially as we have a prince on the throne, whoſe exemplary piety, and rigid attention to the moral duties of life, muſt diſcountenance the practice of vice and immorality in his ſubjects, but it is not the deſign of this eſtimate, to enquire *too minutely* into the cauſes of that degeneracy, which marks the preſent times. If the ſovereign has been careful to appear to us in his private character, as a good huſband, and a good father; he has not been

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equally attentive to the encouragement of thoſe qualities in others, ſince his choice of miniſters and of favourites, has been confined almoſt entirely, to men of profligate morals and principles, who have partaken largely of the royal favor, and this partiality contradicts the *reality* of that character, which his majeſty ſeems ſo anxious to acquire.

Men diſtinguiſhed for their crimes, or ſelected from the meanneſt conditions of life, have been advanced to the confidence and protection of their ſovereign, and their election either proves, that men of integrity and noble birth, have not abilities equal to the duties of the firſt departments in the ſtate, or, that they have been excluded, becauſe they would not deſcend to the ſervility, of implicitly ſupporting the worſt of meaſures, for perhaps the worſt of purpoſes.

The private virtues of the prince, may, indeed, call forth annual and adulatory panegyric from the poet laureat, but their effects not extending beyond the narrow limits of the royal nurſery, can neither obtain nor indeed claim the reverence and eſteem of the multitude, who are prevented from imitating them if they were ever ſo well inclined to it, by the temptations to riot and exceſs which are perpetually held out to them, as if it was the principal object of the preſent reign to promote immorality and debauchery in the lower orders of men, that they may hereafter become eaſy victims to deſpotiſm.

It is not intended, at preſent, to aſcertain what deſigns may have been formed againſt the conſtitution, but this truth is certain, that in appearance the morals of the prince are the very reverſe to thoſe of the people. Future ages will be induced to enquire, if any attempts were made to check the progreſs of immorality, and their credulity will be put to the ſevereſt teſt, when they find that all kinds of diſſipation were encouraged. They will naturally conclude that a Prince ſincere in the diſcharge of his moral obligations would have been equally ſo in his political duties; and that as his example in the one inſtance would have been deemed worthy of imitation in the people, ſo his fidelity in the ſecond would have ſecured to him their love and their confidence.——What then muſt they think when they read that the Nation was immerſed in vice and debauchery, while the Prince pretending to a religious piety which was at variance with his public conduct, made no effort to diſcourage the one or to promote the other? If it would not be preſumption to anticipate the judgment of poſterity upon this occaſion, we might venture to affirm that this reign will appear to them as that of a deſigning hypocrite, in which the people were themſelves rotten.

rotten ripe for ſlavery, but which they eſcaped through the cowardice or incapacity of their Prince, who either wanted courage or talents to avail himſelf of the advantages which he poſſeſſed.—Happily the *contrary* is the fact.

Religion which hitherto maintained its authority over the bulk of the nation has inſenſibly loſt its influence—from believing every thing we came to doubt every thing, and finally to reject almoſt every thing. Chriſtianity was ſuperceded by Deiſm, which in its turn has given way to Scepticiſm, and that bids fair to be ſucceeded by Atheiſm. The truth is, that we have refined on the epicuriſm of Italy and on the materialiſm of France, releaſed from all apprehenſions of future puniſhments, and deprived of the powerful incentive of future rewards, we attend only to the gratification of our pleaſures in this life, regardleſs of futurity, either with reſpect to ourſelves or poſterity. This want of religious principle muſt inevitably affect and in the end deſtroy the moral principle, eſpecially as the loſs has not been ſupplied by wholeſome proviſionary laws. Here is, conſequently, freſh ſubject for ſcandal and indignation, and poſterity will not fail to contraſt the well diſſembled piety of the Sovereign with the infidelity of his ſubjects.

All ranks of men, indifferent to the relative intereſts of ſociety, and intent only on the purſuit of their own pleaſures, feel no concern for themſelves beyond the moment. The Public holds but little place in their conſideration and leſs in their eſteem; and in proportion as individuals become regardleſs of their own rights, thoſe of the Nation are in danger. That manlineſs of character which almoſt bordered on ferocity has almoſt dwindled into effeminacy. The Athletic exerciſes no longer prevail among the laborious claſs of people, but their amuſements are humble imitations of thoſe in higher life. Hence we find that vintners and publicans have their houſes full from morning until evening; and though this ſpirit of idleneſs and profuſion is not avowedly encouraged from the Throne, yet it is winked at and ſuffered to encreaſe, by which means the revenues are indeed improved, but the minds of the people are diverted from affairs of ſtate as well as from the obligations of morality — and the conduct of the ſovereign, in proportion as they demand their attention. — Hence it is that they truſt too much to the diſcretion and honeſty of miniſters, and in order to render them leſs jealous of the power of the crown, they are artfully ſeduced into a ſeeming neceſſity to ſupport it. This has been effected by rendering

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it fashionable to hold trade and tradesmen cheap. The rising generation, despising the useful and profitable professions by which their industrious sires acquired comfortable fortunes; reject with contempt every idea of commerce, and resolving to become gentlemen, turn their thoughts to the church, the law, the army, or the navy, and which require an abject dependance on the sovereign, to whose care the distribution of ecclesiastical, law, and military appointments are confided. Hence it is that our streets are crouded and disgraced with barristers without practice; priests without livings; and dissolute soldiers without employment, who are ready to sacrifice their country and their dearest connections at the command of prince or minister, by preaching, pleading, or drawing the sword against their fellow-subjects.—Hitherto the military profession was respectable, and being intended only for the security of the state, every soldier was a citizen and every citizen in a moment of necessity was a soldier; but of late years the parade of royalty has required a standing army to escort the sovereign from St. James's to Westminster. The drum and fife, it seems, are more in unison with the feelings of the prince than the rude, but sincere, plaudits of the multitude; and the military furor is encreased to such an enormous height, and so many profligate and pennyless adventurers have procured swords and cockades, that the sober and peaceable citizen feels an involuntary impulse whenever he meets those mercenaries, to secure his pockets lest he should lose his handkerchief.

These volunteer tools of power infest our public streets, and are become a nuisance. The pains-taking taylor, grocer, and shoemaker, despising their respective professions, forsake their shops and march away in the rear of some powdered coxcomb of more eminence, and less principle, perhaps than themselves, to Charing-cross or Hyde-park, where they fancy themselves Marlboroughs and Alexanders, and wheel to the right and turn to the left with as much grace and agility as an elephant. But for what purpose are these vain and credulous blockheads seduced from their shops and their families? Is it to familiarise them in time to a military government? or, is it with a design to debauch their principles, and convert them from being honest whigs to be the assassins of public liberty, and the constitution, at a more favourable opportunity?——It must be for one of these purposes, for no other rational excuse can be offered for these military preparations.—Military associations are, indeed, become necessary, but for purposes very different to what they are pretended to be instituted: they are become necessary,

ceſſary, not ſo much to repel foreign invaders, as to repair the miſchiefs which have been already done to the conſtitution, and to which they may hereafter, perhaps, turn their thoughts if they ſhould happen to recollect that the obligations of a good citizen are due in the firſt inſtance to his country and not to his prince. But even our navy and army, ſeem to have undergone a revolution in their principles. The officers of both are taught to look up to their ſovereign as to a Divinity, and the citizen is loſt in the ſoldier or ſailor. The love of country with them is a ſecondary condition, or confined merely to the defence of it from a foreign enemy. This principle, ſo deſtructive to the love of liberty, is the principle by which the military in all deſpotic ſtates are influenced; and it is not unlikely but we have imbibed it from our neighbours the French, with whom we have lived in ſuch intimacy and friendſhip for the laſt eighteen years.

No reflection, however, is intended on the army; but there is not an officer in it of character and diſcernment, who has not been impreſſed, with the ſame idea, or who does not feel the indignity which has been offered to it by the partial promotion and introduction of men, who have neither rank nor ſervitude to recommend them, while brave and veteran officers have been treated with a contemptuous neglect that would at any former period have excited and juſtified a mutiny.

The rage for annual reviews which prevailed till other ſervices more ſerious and melancholy, though not more alarming perhaps, furniſhed employment for the troops; and the attention with which the military were flattered by the *higheſt* authority, gave birth to an opinion that the reigning prince was of an *heroic* diſpoſition. How far this opinion was founded in truth may be collected from the ſubſequent conduct of the ſovereign.

So paſſionately fond as his majeſty appeared to be of military operations in time of *profound peace*, it was ſurely reaſonable to have ſuppoſed that he would have taken the field with the troops encamped for the *internal* defence of their country, and animated them by his royal preſence to endure the ſeverities of a campaign;

The *benign* and *gracious* influence of majeſty might have rendered our neglected armies leſs ſenſible of the inclemency of that weather which the commander in chief had condemned them to encounter in the gloomy

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and tempeſtuous month of November; but the inattention with which they have been treated ſince they have been called into actual ſervice, proves that the parade and pageantry of a military force alone affords matter of amuſement to the royal mind.

What the deſign of the prince might have been in annually meeting his troops at Blackheath, Wimbleton, or in Hyde-park, during that long and reproachful period of peace, is unneceſſary to declare, but this fact is certain, that the army was preferred to the navy; and as it is in France ſo it was likely to become in England, a primary queſtion to our young men "*whether they had ſerved?*"

This was a queſtion which was not merely confined to St. James's; it prevailed among our women, and a negative to it would not have procured them a favourable reception either at the court of the former, or at the routs of the latter. The influence which ſuch a queſtion would have in a country circumſtanced as Great Britain was at the concluſion of a war in which the people had been fatigued by hard ſervices, in which they had been enriched and eager for the enjoyment of that wealth which they had acquired, and plunged at once into every ſpecies of luxurious riot and diſſipation, is too obvious to require explanation. Our vanity had rendered us leſs attentive to more permanent intereſts, and the whole nation was ſeized with a rage for travelling.

France and Italy became crouded with Engliſhmen, many of whom ſhould have been confined by ſumptuary laws to their native ſhore.

The admiration of the whole world had been excited by our glorious atchievements in a war more brilliant and ſucceſsful than any recorded in hiſtory; for the firſt year of the peace an Engliſhman could ſcarce appear even in Paris without being followed by the populace with marks of eſteem. "*C'eſt un anglois,*" was a letter of credit ſufficient to procure him reſpect and confidence, and intoxicated by thoſe civil attentions which France ſo well knows how to apply, no wonder that we became anxious to receive homage from a nation over whom we had ſo recently triumphed. The policy, however, of that country was oppoſed to the bravery of this, and in its turn, triumphed over its unſuſpecting ſimplicity.

France took advantage of our follies as they aroſe to view; ſhe dictated to to us in all matters of dreſs and amuſements, and we even confided to her care the riſing generation. She became the faſhionable ſeminary for the education of Engliſh youth of both ſexes. Our young men contracted prejudices in their infancy in favor of monarchy, and ſeduced by the grandeur and pomp of a military government, they felt a contempt for the leſs gaudy but more valuable conſtitution of their own country; our women, imbibed principles of levity, which ripening into a total diſregard of all decency, rendered them leſs averſe to the infamy of proſtitution.† The well concerted policy of France, even compelled religion to become ſubſervient to her deſigns. That religion which always manifeſted to every other the moſt inveterate rancor and animoſity, no longer looked upon that of England with jealouſy and horror. It was no longer impious to admit the profane and blaſphemous diſciples of Calvin and Luther within the conſecrated walls of the holy cloiſter; her hitherto implacable fury became mollified, not into cordial affection indeed, but into a compaſſionate concern for our errors, which ſhe deigned to confeſs, were more the objects of her pity than of her reſentment.

Her convents threw open their hallowed gates for the reception of the innumerable infants, who were tranſported by their deluded parents from their native country, and the pious nun felt no remorſe on taking the young heretic to her ſacred arms. Hence it was, that France finally prevailed in the moſt important of our concerns.

With her faſhions were imported, her principles and her manners, and it is in theſe particulars that we have ſuſtained the moſt material injury. We have not only become leſs jealous of the crown, but almoſt totally indifferent to the preſervation of our conſtitution, and while our confidence has been given to the former in proportion as it has been proved undeſerving of it, the care of the latter has been abandoned to the diſcretion and fidelity of miniſters, who ſeem to have eſtabliſhed their power beyond the controul of parliament.

Seduced by the inſidious arts of our antient enemies, we were tempted to ſacrifice in the purſuit of frivolous and expenſive diſſipations a conſiderable ſhare of that wealth, which we had taken from them.

† It was an admirable ſaying of Seneca, that a levity of behaviour, is the bane of good morals. *Quicquid boni moris levitate extinguitur.*

France

France became the object of our moſt ſervile imitation, ſhe gave laws from the kitchen of a Wapping tradeſman, to the drawing room of a duke, and even our ſtage took its tone from that of Paris. We were reproached by our gallic neighbours, with having a ſavage partiality to ſcenes of cruelty. They affected to ridicule the moſt ſublime paſſages of our favorite and immortal bard, and to pronounce Hamlet to be a monſtrous farce. If Shakeſpear has violated the unities of time, place, and action; he makes us ample amends for the licence he aſſumes, by tranſfuſing as it were his very ſoul into us, and leading us at his pleaſure thro' the delightful regions of his wild but luxuriant fancy, without our complaining either of violence or abſurdity; on the contrary, our credulity keeps pace with the extravagance of his imagination, and believing in the exiſtence of fairies, ghoſts and monſters, we regret the approach of that moment, which deſtroys the deluſion, and reſtores us to the exerciſe of our reaſon.

This taſte, which has been unjuſtly called barbarous by the French, formed a part of our national character, till a rage for refinements and improvements forced us to prefer their inſipid and unintereſting ſcenes, to the more nervous animating ones of our own drama.

The Engliſh ſtage now became modelled after that of France, and the elegant and lively dialogues of Congreve and Wycherly being declared too groſs for repreſentation, they were inſtantly proſcribed the theatre. One would be led to conclude from this delicacy, and ſcrupulous attention to decorum, that our manners and morals were wonderfully improved within the laſt century; if experience did not prove that mankind become chaſte and refined in their public amuſements, in proportion as they become profligate and corrupt in their manners and principles.

To the wit and vivacity with which the exiled comedies of Wycherly and Congreve abounded, ſucceeded ſenſeleſs rhapſodies of common place ideas, in which plot, incident and character were reprobated, and the vacuum filled up by an inundation of moral ſentences, injudiciouſly crouded together, without any regard to order or neceſſity. The taſte for theſe ſentimental tales, (if they may be called ſo) continued long enough to raiſe the wretched compilers of them from poverty and obſcurity, into influence and credit; and as the multitude had given them a

ſanction, it was not for Genius, confounded and abaſhed at the uſurpation, which prevailed, to contend againſt the current of opinion. Efforts were indeed made to reſtore the drama to its priſtine vigor, but they were ineffectual; at laſt the number of miſerable compoſitions which Indigence and ſometimes Vanity obtruded on the ſtage, accompliſhed what reaſon had in vain attempted.

The nation, awakened from its lethargy, beheld, with ſhameful confuſion, the ſhackles which had enſlaved its judgment, and an advantage was taken of the favourable moment to dethrone Dulneſs from the empire which ſhe had aſſumed.

When men are ſeized with a ſpirit of reformation they are apt to fly from one extreme to the other. Their zeal, raſh and intemperate, leaves diſcretion at a diſtance, and they often eſcape from one abſurdity only to fall into a greater. We were now in danger of having the groſſeſt ribaldry ſubſtituted in the room of humor, and low conceits introduced for fable and incidents, more barbarous and improbable than what prevailed in the moſt unpoliſhed ages. An author, who was as indifferent an hiſtorian and philoſopher as he was a dramatic writer, was at the pains to write what he called a comedy, expreſsly to baniſh theſe ſcraps of piety and morality from the ſtage, and grown weary of that ſilent ſadneſs and ſolemnity with which we had been accuſtomed to attend theſe exhibitions, and anxious to reſtore to mirth and chearfulneſs their proper province, we ſought with avidity an opportunity to reſtabliſh their authority.

This writer availed himſelf of the favourable occaſion, and ſucceeded beyond expectation or deſert. We were now preſented with ſcenes too vulgar and abſurd even for a Smithfield booth, and the applauſe with which his performance was received, may be attributed to two cauſes, neither of which added even one ſolitary laurel to his brow. The one was the novelty of being diverted in the theatre, and the other a momentary but undeſerved prejudice which prevailed againſt the acting manager, which alone was at that time ſufficient to have created a party in favor of a writer of leſs merit and popularity. We are, however, indebted to him for having broken the ice, and paved the way for true comedy. It was now no longer criminal in a poet to excite laughter in an audience, but

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the honor of a complete triumph was reſerved for a gentleman ſcarce known in the republic of letters.

It was reſerved for the ingenious author of the Duenna, to reſcue the ſtage from the contempt into which it had fallen, and to reinſtate the comic muſe in all her native charms. This admirable opera, did not immediately accompliſh theſe ends, becauſe it was one of thoſe compoſitions in which ſenſe is generally ſacrificed to ſound, and where the underſtanding is arreſted by harmony from paſſing judgment. It however, poſſeſſes all the properties of a regular drama, and the intricacy of the plot, and the variety of intereſting incidents with which it abounds, does not require the irreſiſtable influence of muſic to enſure it ſucceſs. The eagerneſs, with which all ranks of people reſorted to the repreſentation, is a ſufficient teſtimony of its merit, but while it gave reputation to the author, it raiſed our expectations of his future productions to an extravagant height; to a height the more dangerous, as he was yet a candidate for that fame, which he has ſince obtained, and the moſt trifling accident might at that time have deſtroyed his hopes perhaps for ever. Happily, his abilities, equal to the taſk of commanding applauſe, kept pace with our expectations, and the School for Scandal gave the final ſtamp of truth to the general opinion.

But I have wandered from my ſubject into unneceſſary panegyric. The public voice has pronounced an eulogium on the Author of this inimitable Comedy, more flattering and reſpectable than that of any individual.

It is however to be lamented, that the emancipation of our drama, has not been accompanied by any change for the better in our manners, which have become effeminate, while the principles which ſecured to us the enjoyment of liberty, and rendered us equally formidable and reſpectable abroad, have been deſtroyed. The riches which deluged us from the Eaſt, the extenſion of commerce, and the opulence which conqueſt and trade produced, have operated in various ways, to reduce the effects of principle on our conduct.——Even the loweſt claſs of people have aſpired to emulate their ſuperiors in improvement, and the mob, which thirty years ſince would have aſſaulted any one who wore a queue, have now their friſeurs, and never appear but with their hair dreſſed in the neweſt faſhion. This however would have

have only been matter of ridicule, but unhappily Vice has been more rapid in her progreſs than Folly. The lower orders of men have not only become refined but corrupt, and the loſs of principle in the body of the people is a very ſerious, and a very alarming circumſtance, eſpecially when we recollect the influence and power which the Crown affords to the Prince, who has an inclination to be deſpotic.

With a Prince ſo diſpoſed, we have only to hope that his capacity will not enable him to realize his intentions; the poiſon will then, in the political as it is in the vegetable world, be accompanied by its antidote, and the health of the conſtitution be preſerved.

If we direct our attention to the other ſex, we ſhall diſcover abundant cauſe of complaint. The relaxation of morals which diſtinguiſh the preſent times has been occaſioned in a great meaſure by the general proſtitution of our women; perhaps no period of antient or modern hiſtory is marked with ſo many inſtances of infidelity as the preſent; and women who have become inſenſible to the impulſe of honor, will always leſſen the value of it to the extent of their abilities, in the opinion of thoſe with whom they are connected, and over whom they have any influence.

The approximation of characters, the facility with which the lower and middle orders of ſociety obtain admiſſion to the confidence and converſation of people of rank; the abolition of moral as well as of political diſtinctions in all public places of amuſement; the admiſſion of public and mercenary proſtitutes into the front and ſide boxes of our theatres, have contributed to deſtroy all reverence for chaſtity.

To theſe cauſes we may attribute the loſs of public as well as of private virtue; the want of ſpirit and unanimity in the people, and the rapid decline of the Britiſh Empire.—— Immerſed as we are in effeminacy and diſſipation; our military modelled by that of France; our citizens corrupted and ſeduced into habits of idleneſs and expenſive pleaſures; our women acting in open defiance of modeſty and decency, our wives, ſiſters, and daughters compelled to mix with the moſt worthleſs of their ſex, whoſe proſtitution is become excuſable merely becauſe it has become general; What proſpect have we of recovering the antient

dignity

dignity of this country, but in a change in our manners, ſince it is needleſs to expect good politic from a poiſoned ſource?

In ſhort, "neceſſity alone muſt be the parent of reformation—ſo long as degenerate and unprincipled manners can ſupport themſelves, they will be deaf to reaſon, blind to conſequences, and obſtinate in the long eſtabliſhed purſuit of gain and pleaſure. In ſuch minds, the idea of a public has no place; and therefore can never be a curb to private gratifications: nor can ſuch minds be ever awakened from their fatal dream, until the voice of an abuſed people rouſe them into fear; or the ſtate itſelf totters through the general incapacity, cowardice, and diſunion of thoſe who ſhould ſupport it. Whenever this compelling power, neceſſity, ſhall appear; then, and not till then, may we hope that our deliverance is at hand. Effeminacy, rapacity, and faction will then be ready to reſign the reigns they now uſurp; one common danger will create one common intereſt, Virtue may riſe on the ruins of corruption, and a deſparing nation yet be ſaved by the wiſdom, the integrity, and unſhaken courage of ſome great miniſter."

dignity of this country, but in a change in our manners, since it is needless to expect good politic from a poisoned source?

In short, "necessity alone must be the parent of reformation—the long at degenerate and unprincipled manners can support themselves, they will be deaf to reason, blind to consequences, and obstinate in the long established pursuit of gain and pleasure. In such minds, the idea of a public has no place; and therefore can never be a curb to private gratifications: nor can such minds be ever awakened from their fatal dream, until the voice of an abused people rouse them into fear; or the state itself totters through the general incapacity, cowardice, and disunion of those who should support it. Whenever this compelling power, necessity, shall appear; then, and not till then, may we hope that our deliverance is at hand. Effeminacy, rapacity, and faction will then be ready to resign the reigns they now usurp; one common danger will create one common interest, Virtue may rise on the ruins of corruption, and a desparing nation yet be saved by the wisdom, the integrity, and unshaken courage of some great minister."

ADVERTISEMENT.

MR. SYKES having had the audacity to ſwear, that the Author offered to ſuppreſs the foregoing pamphlet, in which his rapacity in India has been expoſed, for a pecuniary conſideration, and as the Court of King's Bench has diſcharged the Rule, which had been granted againſt him, he has judged it neceſſary in vindication of himſelf, from ſo infamous and malicious an aſperſion, to publiſh the very extraordinary affidavit, of that very extraordinary gentleman, with that of his own; leaving it to the world to decide from their reſpective characters, to whom credit is due.

IN THE KING'S BENCH.

JOHN FIELDING and JOHN WALKER, both of Paternoſter-row, in the city of London, Bookſellers and partners; ſeverally make oath, and ſay, that on, or about the twenty third day of Auguſt laſt, William Auguſtus Miles, of Rathbone place, near Oxford-ſtreet, in the County of Middleſex, applied to theſe deponents, with a book or pamphlet in manuſcript, entitled, "A POLITICAL MIRROR, or a Sum-"mary Review of the preſent Reign; with notes explanatory and hiſtorical." And did read over the ſaid pamphlet, or part thereof, to this deponent John Fielding, and then told theſe deponents, that he intended, or was going to print and publiſh the ſame for ſale, and deſired theſe deponents to take the charge and conduct of the ſale and publication thereof, when the ſame was printed, to which theſe deponents agreed. And theſe deponents for themſelves farther ſeverally ſay, that ſince the twenty third day of

Auguſt laſt, about two hundred and fifty Copies of the ſaid book or pamphlet, as theſe deponents verily believe, were printed for ſale, and the ſame were printed in London for theſe deponents, and that theſe deponents at the deſire and requeſt, and for, and on the account of the ſaid William Auguſtus Miles, as the author of the ſaid book or pamphlet, did when the ſame were ſo printed off, take the ſaid printed copies into their ſhop in Paternoſter row aforeſaid, and that the ſaid printed copies, of the ſaid book or pamphlet, have ſince the ſaid twenty third day of Auguſt laſt paſt, been upon ſale by theſe deponents, upon the account of, and for the uſe and benefit of the ſaid William Auguſtus Miles, and that theſe deponents, have ever ſince the ſaid twenty third day of Auguſt laſt paſt, publickly and openly in their ſaid ſhop, by themſelves and their ſervants, vended and ſold the ſaid printed book or pamphlet, and delivered the ſame to every perſon and perſons, who aſked for, or applied to buy the ſame, and that theſe deponents, or one of them, or their ſervants on their account, did, of every perſon and perſons who bought the ſaid pamphlet, take and receive one ſhilling and ſixpence, as, and for the price of each of the ſaid pamphlets. And theſe deponents for themſelves, farther ſeverally ſay, that they have frequently, ſince the ſaid pamphlet has been printed, ſeen and converſed with the ſaid William Auguſtus Miles, concerning the ſame, and the contents thereof; and the ſale and publication thereof, and that the book or pamphlet, hereunto annexed, intitled, "A Political Mirror, or a Summary Review of the "preſent Reign, with notes, explanatory and hiſtorical," is one of the pamphlets that were publiſhed and ſold by theſe deponents, at their ſhop, as aforeſaid, and is, as theſe deponents believe, a true and perfect copy of the ſaid manuſcript copy, of the ſaid book ſo delivered to theſe deponents, by the ſaid William Auguſtus Miles, and printed off as aforeſaid. And theſe deponents farther ſay, that the ſaid William Auguſtus Miles, is, as they verily believe, the author and writer of the ſaid pamphlet hereunto annexed, and the contents thereof.

Both Sworn at the TREASURY CHAMBER, Nov. 8, 1779. *Before me* F. BULLER.

JOHN FIELDING.
JOHN WALKER.

IN THE KING'S BENCH.

FRANCIS SYKES, of Upper Brook Street, Groſvenor Square, in the county of Middleſex, Eſquire, maketh oath, and ſaith, That he hath peruſed and read over a certain book or pamphlet hereto annexed, entituled, "*A Political Mirror, &c.*" and hath particularly peruſed and examined the paſſage or ſentence in folio 19 of the ſaid annexed book or pamphlet, beginning with the words, "*among thoſe of our countrymen,*" and ending with the words, "*whom his unfeeling avarice hath compelled to die with hunger;*" and verily believes, that he this deponent is the perſon in the ſaid paſſage or ſentence particularly meant and alluded to; and this deponent, for himſelf, ſaith, That in the month of June, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſixty-four, he left England, and embarked for Bengal in the ſervice of the Engliſh Eaſt India Company (in which ſervice he had been in India for many years before) and arrived at Bengal the latter end of May, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſixty-five, and ſaith, That he continued in India from that time in the ſervice of the company, and was their reſident at Muxadavad, in the province of Bengal, till the month of January, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſixty-nine, when he, this deponent, left India, and returned to England, where he arrived in the month of July, in the ſame year, and that this deponent hath, ever ſince the ſaid month of July, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſixty-nine, continued in England, and hath never ſince then been out of this kingdom; and this deponent farther ſaith, That he hath been informed and verily believes, that in the month of November, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſixty-nine, there was in the province of Bengal aforeſaid *great complaint* of and *great diſtreſs felt* for the want and ſcarcity of *rice* and *grain*, occaſioned by an uncommon drought that year, which *threatened a famine* throughout the province, but that there neither was, as this deponent verily believes, any complaint whatſoever made nor any diſtreſs felt in any part of the ſaid province for the want of grain before *that* month; and this deponent farther ſaith, That he hath been alſo informed and verily believes that there *was occaſioned ſolely by ſuch uncom-*

mon drought, but *by no other means*, a famine throughout the province; and that the ſame continued and prevailed from the beginning of the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy till the latter end of the month of December, one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy, when, as this deponent hath alſo been informed, and verily believes, the ſaid famine did entirely ceaſe and ſubſide; and this deponent farther ſaith, That during the whole of the time the ſaid famine prevailed, he, this deponent, did reſide in England; and this deponent farther ſaith, *That he is perfectly, entirely, and truly innocent of the charge contained and expreſſed in the ſaid paſſage* or ſentence in folio 19 of the ſaid annexed pamphlet; and that the ſaid charge, concerning this deponent, is in every reſpect falſe and wholly groundleſs; and this deponent farther ſaith, That ſome time during the ſitting of Parliament in the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-three, *when the affairs of the Eaſt India Company were under the parliament's conſideration*, this deponent was one day at his houſe, in Brook Street, perſonally applied to by a perſon who then told this deponent his name was Miles, and after repreſenting to this deponent that he, this deponent, would no doubt wiſh (as India affairs were then under public conſideration; and this deponent's name was mentioned in thoſe concerns with the names of ſeveral others) That this deponent's character ſhould be repreſented in a fair and clear manner, and as the public papers were the regular channel for peoples honour and credit to be handed to the loweſt perſon in the kingdom; he, the ſaid Miles, wiſhed and deſired that he, this deponent, would give him, the ſaid Miles, authority to act for him, this deponent therein, and to vindicate his, this deponent's character in the public papers, and at the ſame time repreſented himſelf to this deponent as a perſon in great indigence and diſtreſs; and this deponent farther ſaith, That he poſitively refuſed to comply with the ſaid Miles's requeſt, or to enter into any converſation with him, except that this deponent informed the ſaid Miles that he never had nor ever would employ any perſon on any ſuch occaſion as the ſaid Miles deſired, and would not give any gratification whatſoever, either to him, the ſaid Miles, or any one elſe for any ſuch purpoſe; and this deponent farther ſaith, That a few months after the ſaid laſt-mentioned application the ſaid Miles, to this deponent's very great ſurprize, called on this deponent, at his ſaid houſe, in Brook Street, and then told this deponent that he the ſaid Miles had ſeen a pamphlet in manuſcript which greatly

reflected

reflected on this deponent and his character, but that it was not then published, and that it was in his the ſaid Miles's power to ſuppreſs the publication, but as the author did expect to get money by the ſale of it, he, the ſaid Miles, ſuggeſted to this deponent whether he, this deponent, had not better give to the author thereof a ſum of money to have the ſaid pamphlet ſuppreſſed, to which this deponent then replied that he would not give any man a ſhilling for withholding any thing againſt him from the public, and, at the ſame time, told the ſaid Miles that he, this deponent, ſhould puniſh any perſon who durſt or ſhould attempt to publiſh any falſehoods againſt him; and this deponent farther ſaith, That he, this deponent, verily believes that the ſaid Miles, who ſo applied, to this deponent as aforeſaid, is William Auguſtus Miles, now of Rathbone Place, near Oxford Street, in the county of Middleſex; and that the ſaid Miles did ſo apply at both the ſaid times to this deponent purpoſely to obtain money from this deponent, under the pretence either of writing in favour of this deponent's name and character, or of ſuppreſſing publications where this deponent's name and character were abuſed and traduced; and this deponent verily believes, That the ſaid William Auguſtus Miles is the writer and author of the ſaid pamphlet hereunto annexed.

Sworn at my houſe, in LINCOLN'S-INN FIELDS, Nov. 9, 1779, *Before me,* } FRANCIS SYKES.

F. BULLER.

IN THE KING'S BENCH.

WILLIAM AUGUSTUS MILES, of Rathbone Place, in the county of Middleſex, Gentleman, maketh oath, and ſaith, That in the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-three, he, this deponent, was connected with an evening paper; and as the affairs of the India Company

pany were at that time under the conſideration of the Houſe of Commons, he was applied to, to expoſe the conduct of thoſe ſervants of the Company who had acquired ſuch immenſe fortunes by improper means; and among thoſe who were mentioned to this deponent, for this purpoſe, was a Mr. Sykes, but as this deponent was informed that he was the intimate friend of a gentleman, ſince dead, to whom this deponent was under many obligations, he not only declined writing againſt him, but adviſed him by letter of the application which had been made to him, and afterwards waited on him, and aſſured him, for the reaſon above-mentioned, that he ſhould not take any part againſt him; and this deponent farther ſaith, That he NEVER did, either at that time or at any other, DIRECTLY or INDIRECTLY, aſk for any pecuniary gratuity from the ſaid Mr. Sykes; and this deponent ſaith, That the ſaid Mr. Sykes did at that time acknowledge himſelf much indebted to this deponent for his civility; and this deponent ſaith, That he never made any SUBSEQUENT application to Mr. Sykes on any account whatever, except in the ſpring of the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-four, for a few franks, which were accordingly ſent to this deponent by the ſaid Mr. Sykes; and this deponent farther ſaith, That he has not WRITTEN to, or SEEN, or had ANY CORRESPONDENCE whatever, ſince that period, with Mr. Sykes, directly or indirectly, until the bookſellers, whom this deponent deſired to publiſh the Political Mirror, informed him that Mr. Sykes had applied to them to deliver up the name of the author, upon which he, this deponent, inſtantly wrote a letter to Mr. Sykes, and avowed himſelf the author of the pamphlet aforeſaid, and of which letter a copy is hereunto annexed; and this deponent alſo ſaith, That the paragraph complained of, by the ſaid Mr. Sykes, in page 19, in the ſaid publication, was told to this deponent as a fact by the Right Honourable Lord George Germain, in the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-two, or one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-three, who was at that time a member, and one of the committee, which ſat upon India affairs; and this deponent ſaith, That he never made any offer to ſuppreſs the publication of the pamphlet, nor gave any advice, nor employed, nor directed any other perſon to adviſe Mr. Sykes to have the ſame ſuppreſſed; nor has he this deponent to his recollection and belief, even SEEN Mr. Sykes ſince the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy-three, or one thouſand ſeven

hundred

hundred and ſeventy-four; nor has he this deponent ever called at his houſe ſince, nor authorized, nor hinted to any other perſon to do ſo, nor had this deponent any intention or deſire of extorting any pecuniary ſatisfaction either from the ſaid Mr. Sykes, or from any other perſon, on account of the above publication.

WILLIAM AUGUSTUS MILES.

Sworn at my chambers in SERJEANTS-INN, CHANCERY-LANE, NOV. 11, 1779, *before me,*

W. H. ASHURST.

Rathbone-place, London, 2d Nov. 1779.

SIR,

I AM this inſtant informed by my booksellers that you have required them to give up the author of a pamphlet, entitled, the Political Mirror. How that pamphlet could poſſibly come into your hands I am at a loſs to imagine, as I peremptorily forbid the publication of it till after the meeting of Parliament, in order that I might correct it, and, indeed, add to it an eſtimate of the manners of the times.

With reſpect to the note ſo offenſive to you, I had the fact from a member of the preſent miniſtry, who is high in the royal confidence of his Sovereign, and on whoſe authority I thought myſelf juſtified in repeating it, eſpecially in a book, the principal object of which is, to mark the progreſs of venality and corruption without degenerating into perſonal abuſe.

It is the duty of an hiſtorian to record facts; and in the hiſtory of the preſent reign, which I am preparing for the preſs, I ſhall have occaſion to enter more particularly into India matters, and the tranſactions of our countrymen in Indoſtan, than I have already done in the Political Mirror.

If,

If, however, what I have inſerted relative to you ſhould not be true, I will very chearfully expunge it.—The book is not yet given to the world, nor ſhall it, if I ſhould diſcover that it is ſtained with even one falſehood—This is an act of juſtice which is due to you, and to all mankind; and as I think it equally daſtardly and illiberal in any writer to ſkreen himſelf when called upon, I have avowed myſelf, that you may have an opportunity of doing yourſelf juſtice—At the ſame time, I muſt beg of you to underſtand, that though I would not wantonly or deſignedly ſport with the character of any individual, yet where it becomes my duty to ſpeak of facts which reflect diſgrace upon my country, it is not the dread of *private* reſentment, nor yet of a court of law, that ſhall *deter* me from expoſing the guilty perpetrators of them to the odium of the world.

I am, Sir,

Your humble ſervant,

WILLIAM AUGUSTUS MILES.

To —— Sykes, Eſq. Upper Brook-ſtreet, Groſvenor-ſquare.

Remarks upon the Affidavit of Mr. SYKES.

MR. SYKES ſwears that I called at his houſe, and offered to procure the ſuppreſſion of a manuſcript pamphlet, in which he was abuſed, for a pecuniary conſideration. In anſwer to which, I have alſo delivered upon oath, that I have neither ſeen, converſed with, written to, communicated with, or ſent any perſon to, nor called myſelf on, Mr. Sykes, ſince the ſpring of the year 1774, and then only for a few franks, and as to the pamphlet in queſtion, it was not even began till the latter end of laſt June, as may be collected from the facts which it contains, and which happened at that period, as well as by the affidavit of the bookſellers, who ſwear that the manuſcript was not delivered to them till the TWENTY-THIRD OF LAST AUGUST.

Neither

Neither is it probable that Mr. Sykes ſhould have been ſelected for the object of ſuch a propoſition, as he is only mentioned in a note explanatory of an hiſtorical event; the pamphlet is a ſummary review of the whole reign, in which miniſters and their aſſociates are cenſured with greater ſeverity than that *angry* gentleman, and to whom it is more likely that a profligate ſcribbler would have applied for relief from indigence, than to an individual whoſe parſimony and meanneſs is as univerſally known as is his low origin, and the methods by which he contrived to amaſs a princely fortune.

It was not probable that an application would be made for pecuniary aſſiſtance to a man who, after his return to England with the enormous ſum of SIX HUNDRED THOUSAND POUNDS, (as was reported and is believed) could ſuffer his ſiſter to continue in the menial capacity of a ſervant, and his own father to remain in a ſtate of miſerable indigence.

If the pamphlet had been a hiſtory of this *extraordinary* gentleman, and confined entirely to an enquiry into his conduct in Bengal, it is poſſible that an unprincipled writer might have intended to extort money from him; but written as the Political Mirror obviouſly is, for the purpoſe of expoſing the wickedneſs and imbecility of Adminiſtration, it is a ſufficient refutation of ſo impudent and ſo ſcandalous an aſſertion.

The poverty of a man's circumſtances is no argument that he ſhould be a villain; neither does it afford him an excuſe. The deciſive and uniform part which I have taken in politics, is a proof that I am not deſtitute of integrity, though I am poor; and the indigence with which I am reproached by my adverſary, is an encomium on my patriotiſm, which it is evident he did not intend.

Without being vain of my literary talents, I might certainly employ them more *profitably* in the ſervice of government, (if ſo abandoned a group of miniſters, who have loſt us America, can be called a government) eſpecially when it is recollected how eager the Treaſury have been to engage, and how profuſe they have been with the public money, in rewarding writers of all capacities, from the *profound* and *elaborate* author of the Hiſtory of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, down to the flimſy and deſpicable manufacturers of abuſive eſſays and paragraphs in the public prints.

Though I have not the *genius* and *application* of the ſturdy recruit whom they have lately enliſted and placed among the *rank and file* of the Board of Trade, yet my abilities, poor as they are, would certainly entitle me to participate of their liberality; but the truth is, I have too much pride, and, I truſt, too much honeſty, to ally myſelf to fraud and oppreſſion, or to connect myſelf with men who ſooner orlater muſt feel the accumulated vengeance of their country; Mr. Sykes will therefore meet with very little credit when he aſſerts, that I am influenced by my poverty to ſport with truth and ſacrifice my independence.

It is however worthy of obſervation, that he admits, in his affidavit, that a famine happened in India, and in the very year in which he left that country. He attributes it, indeed, to *a great and uncommon drought*, but he obſerves a total ſilence with reſpect to the monopoly of rice, which it is univerſally believed was the cauſe of that famine, and which, by his own account, happened *four months* after his departure from Bengal. This is allowing as little time as poſſible for the effects of the monopoly being felt, ſince it could not be expected to operate immediately.

He admits the FAMINE, and does not deny the MONOPOLY; not a ſyllable is ſaid againſt that part of the charge, and though there was a drought ſufficient to have hurt the harveſt, yet that very circumſtance perhaps ſuggeſted to the *fertile* imagination of Mr. Sykes the utility of buying up all the rice in a ſcarce ſeaſon, that the neceſſitous natives ſhould be compelled to purchaſe ſuſtenance of him on his own terms, eſpecially as their religion forbids their eating animal fleſh, and rice is their principal ſupport. — A monopoly in a plentiful harveſt would not have anſwered the purpoſes for which monopolies are generally made. Mr. Sykes, therefore, not denying the monopoly with which he is accuſed, and which muſt have added to the diſtreſs ariſing from a bad harveſt, is indirectly admitting the charge; beſides, I had the fact from a nobleman who was formerly a member of a committee inſtituted by the Houſe of Commons to enquire into the conduct of the Company's ſervants in India, and whom it was reaſonable to ſuppoſe had diſcovered the fact in the courſe of his enquiry. The famine was matter of public notoriety, and univerſally admitted, till the criminal contriver of it, relying on his ill-acquired wealth, and on the [difficulty] which his accuſer would find, in procuring legal evidence, thought proper to deny it.

While

While I was on a visit to the late Lord Lyttelton at Hagley, an attorney repeatedly called on the booksellers, and menaced them with a prosecution, unless they would discover the author. They communicated to me the enquiries which had been made and on whose account, which surpriz'd me indeed, but did not alarm me. I not only authorized them to deliver me up, but immediately avowed myself to Mr. Sykes.† This very circumstance, contradicts in a great measure, that part of his affidavit in which he has attempted to brand me with an act of equal meanness and villainy, and which I must have been an egregious blockhead to have committed; in short, every part of his affidavit is false, except where he asserts, that he "*verily believes me to be the Author*,"‡ and his having sworn to the truth of it, proves nothing more than that he has shewn as little regard to the MEANS, by which he would gratify his revenge, as he has already done to THOSE by which he has ENRICH'D himself.

The Court of King's Bench having discharged the Rule, I thought it due to my character and my feelings, to communicate to Mr. Sykes by a *private* letter, my sentiments of his conduct, and which letter, to prevent any mistake, and to leave him entirely without excuse, for not answering, I sent to his house in Upper Brook street, the 20th of last November, by my servant. He has not thought proper to take any notice of it, and as I have vindicated my character from his aspersions, and I hope, established my innocence of the baseness with which he has falsely and maliciously charged me, I do not mean to pursue my triumph any farther; Mr. Sykes may therefore unenvied, and undisturbed by me, enjoy his immense fortune. Happy in the reflection, that though I have not like him, an affluence to boast of, neither am I marked with the crimes of COWARDICE and PERJURY.

LONDON, *Dec.* 11, 1779.

† VIDE the letter, page 63.

‡ He might certainly venture to "BELIEVE" that I was the author, when he had an assurance of it under my own hand SEVEN DAYS prior to his making an affidavit. He might have produced my letter in court, or on the credit of it, sworn *positively* to the fact, without terminating a series of scandalous lies, by "VERILY BELIEVING," what I never meant to deny, but the exposure of my letter dated, and sent to him on the SECOND OF NOVEMBER, would have contradicted in part, the deposition which he made UPON OATH, before Mr. Justice Buller, on the NINTH. If this letter had been produced in Court, it would have extorted a blush even from the Solicitor General, but it was *prudently* suppressed, though the purposes for which it was withheld, have not answered the expectations of my prosecutor.

FINIS.